بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

The MOSLEM DOCTRINE OF GOD

By S. M. ZWEMER

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A TALISMAN FROM A MOSLEM BOOK ON THE NAMES OF ALLAH.

Translation: *"In the name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate. Truly Thou wilt preserve the one who carries this writing of mine from the evil of all that might harm him and Thou wilt appoint over him its angels and servants and assistants who are entrusted with its service and guard him by day and by night. Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah and those with him are stronger than the unbelievers. Among them are merciful ones whom we see bowing and kneeling seeking kindness from Allah and favor. Their marks are on their faces, the effect of prostration, and that is their likeness in the Pentateuch and the Gospel."*

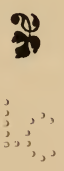
THE MOSLEM DOCTRINE OF GOD

AN ESSAY ON THE CHARACTER AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH ACCORDING TO THE KORAN AND ORTHODOX TRADITION

BY

SAMUEL M. ZWEMER

AUTHOR OF "ARABIA, THE CRADLE OF ISLAM," "RAYMUND LULL," ETC.



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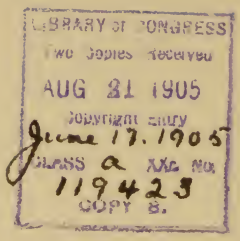

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TO MY BELOVED FATHER

Adrian Zwemer.

"Yet most I thank thee, not for any deed,
But for the sense thy living self did breed
That Fatherhood is at the great world's core."

"Your God and our God are the same."—The Koran.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well, the devils also believe and tremble."—James 2: 19.

"Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."—Matt. 11: 27.

PREFACE

JEWS, Christians and Mohammedans believe in one God and yet differ widely in their interpretation of this idea. Unless we know the Moslem's idea of God we cannot understand his creed nor judge his philosophy, nor intelligently communicate our idea of God to him. The strength of Islam is not in its ritual nor in its ethics, but in its tremendous and fanatical grasp on the one great truth —Monotheism.

Our purpose in these pages is to learn the extent and content of this idea; an idea which holds the Moslem world even more than they hold it. I have found no book in English, among the wealth of literature on Islam, that treats of this subject. In German there are two books on the theology of the Koran,[1] but both are rare and limited, as appears from their titles, to a consideration of what *the Koran* teaches.

For a fair interpretation, however, of Islam's idea of God we must go not only to the Koran, but also to orthodox tradition. The *Hadith* are the records of the authoritative sayings and doings of Moham-

[1]Haller's *Lehre von Gott aus dem Koran gezogen.* Altenburg, 1779. Dettinger's *Beiträge zu einer Theologie des Korans.* Tübingen Zeitschrift für Theologie, 1831, 3's Heft.

med and have exercised tremendous power on Moslem thought since the early days of Islam; not only by supplementing but by interpreting the Koran. The *Hadith* are accepted by every Moslem sect, in some form or other, and are indispensable to Islam. For proof of these statements we refer to Sprenger and Muir. The Koran-text quoted is from Palmer's translation, together with references to the three standard commentaries of Beidhawi, Zamakhshari and Jellalain. For orthodox tradition I have used the collection known as *Mishkat-ul-Misabih,* because it is short, authoritative, and because an English translation of this collection exists. (Captain Matthew's *Mishcat-ul-Masabih,* or a collection of the most authentic traditions regarding the actions and sayings of Mohammed; exhibiting the origin of the manners and customs, the civil, religious and military policy of the Musselmans. Translated from the original Arabic. Calcutta, 1809; 2 folio volumes.) This collection, originally the work of *Bagäwi* (516 A.H.) and based on the classical works of *Buchari* and *Muslim,* was edited and issued in its present form by *Abdullah-al-Khatib* (737 A.H.); and Brockelmann in his history of Arabic literature calls it "the most correct and practical book of Moslem traditions." I had no access to the translation and all references are to the Arabic edition printed in Delhi.

The frontispiece is from the celebrated *Shems-ul-*

Ma'arif of *Mŭhyee-ed-Din-al-Buni,* This book treats of the names of God and their use in amulets, healing, recovering lost property, etc. I am aware that in some parts of the Mohammedan world disintegration of religious ideas is in progress and that the *theology* as well as the ethics of Islam is being modified by contact with Western civilization, Protestant missions, and Christian morals. My idea, however, was not to sketch the theological views of Moslems in Liverpool nor of the reformers of Islam in India, but of the vast orthodox majority of the people both learned and illiterate.

In the comparative study of any religion the idea of God is fundamental, and if these pages give a clearer idea of what Mohammed taught and what his followers believe concerning Allah, the Christian missionary will the more earnestly preach to Moslems the Gospel of our Saviour, who said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

S. M. Zwemer.

Bahrein, Arabia,
February, 1905.

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"Historically, a pure theism is all but impotent. There is only one example of it on a large scale in the world, and that is a kind of bastard Christianity—Mohammedanism; and we all know what good that is as a religion. There are plenty of people who call themselves Theists and not Christians. Well, I venture to say that is a phase that will not last. There is little substance in it. The God whom men know outside of Jesus Christ is a poor nebulous thing; an idea and not a reality. You will have to get something more substantial than the far-off god of an unchristian Theism if you mean to sway the world and to satisfy men's hearts."—*Alexander Maclaren* (in sermon on John 14 : 1).

I

THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH

"One God the Arabian prophet preached to man;
One God the Orient still
Adores through many a realm of mighty span—
A God of power and will.

"A power that at his pleasure doth create
To save or to destroy,
And to eternal pain predestinate
As to eternal joy."

—*Lord Houghton.*

AMONG all the religions of the world there is none that has a shorter creed than Islam; none whose creed is so well known and so often repeated. The whole system of Mohammedan theology and philosophy and religious life is summed up in seven words: *La ilaha illa Allah, Mohammed rasul Allah.* "There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is Allah's apostle"—on these two phrases hang all the laws and teaching and morals of Islam. The logical development of Islam took place after the death of Mohammed in two ways: by the interpretation of the Koran and by the collection (or inven-

tion) of a mass of so-called tradition. The former is what Allah revealed by means of a book; the latter is what Allah revealed by means of a man, Mohammed. Both revelations have well-nigh equal authority and both rest their authority on the *kalimet* or creed of seven words. The accompanying analysis shows this relation.[1]

Gibbon characterizes the first part of the Moslem's creed as "an eternal truth" and the second part as a "necessary fiction."[2] Concerning the latter statement there is no dispute, but whether we can admit the former depends altogether on the character of the Being of whom it is affirmed that He displaces all other gods. If Allah's nature and attributes are in any way distorted or are unworthy of Deity, then even the first clause of the briefest of all creeds is false. "Because Mohammed taught the unity of God it has been too hastily concluded that he was a great social and moral reformer as well. But there is no charm in the abstract doctrine of the unity of God to elevate humanity. The essential point is the character attributed to this one God."[3] It is, therefore, not superfluous to inquire both from the Koran and from orthodox Tradition what Moslems mean by asserting God's unity and what character they ascribe to their only, true God. For there is no doubt

[1]Revised and reprinted from *Arabia, the Cradle of Islam.*
[2]*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Vol. III., pp. 488.
[3]Osborne's *Islam under the Khalifs of Bagdad,* p. vii.

that they themselves emphasize nothing so much as this part of their system. It is the motto-text of the Moslem's home-life, the baptismal formula to welcome the infant as a believer, the final message to whisper in the ears of the dying, *La ilaha illa Allah.* These words they chant when carrying a burden or a bier; these words they inscribe on their banners and their door-posts; they appear on all the early coins of the caliphs and have been the great battle-cry of Islam for thirteen centuries. By repeating these words, the infidel turns Moslem and the renegade is welcomed back to a spiritual brotherhood. By this creed the faithful are called to prayer five times daily, from Morocco to the Philippines, and this is the platform on which all the warring sects of Islam can unite, for it is the foundation and criterion of their religion. According to a traditional saying of Mohammed, "God said to Moses, if you were to put the whole universe on one side of the scale-pans and the words *La ilaha illa Allah* on the other this would outweigh that."[1] Orthodox tradition also relates that the prophet one day was passing by a dry and withered tree and as soon as he struck it with his staff the leaves fell off; then the prophet said, Verily, the words *La ilaha illa Allah* shake off the believer's sins as my staff shook off the leaves from this tree.[2]

[1] *Mishkat el Misabih,* Delhi edition, Book X., p. 201.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 202.

The Koran is never weary of reiterating the formula which expresses God's unity, and the one hundred and twelfth Surah, specially devoted to this subject, is, so Moslems say, equal in value to one-third of the whole book. It is related by Zamakhshari in his commentary that Mohammed said, "The seven heavens and the seven earths are built on this Surah and whoever reads it enters paradise."

Now in spite of the emphasis thus put on the doctrine of God's unity by Moslems, and in spite of the fact that it is *this* part of their creed which is their glory and boast, there has been a strange neglect on the part of most writers who have described the religion of Mohammed to study Mohammed's idea of God. It is so easy to be misled by a name or by etymologies. Nearly all writers take for granted that the God of the Koran is the same being and has like attributes as Jehovah or as the Godhead of the New Testament. Especially is this true of the rationalistic students of Islam in Germany and England. Is this view correct? The answer, whether affirmative or negative, has important bearing not only on missions to Moslems but on a true philosophical attitude toward this greatest of all false faiths. If we have to deal with "an eternal truth" linked to "a necessary fiction" our simple task is to sever the link and let the eternal truth stand to make men free. On the other hand, if the necessary fiction is put as the foundation of a distorted truth, there can

be no compromise; both clauses of the creed fall together.

To the etymologist, Zeus-Pater, Jupiter and Heavenly Father mean the same thing; but these words express widely different ideas to the student of comparative religions. Many people have a better knowledge of Jupiter, Brahma or Thor as deities than of *Allah;* and it is so because in the former case they go to mythology and in the latter case to etymology for the sum of their ideas. The word *Allah* is used for God not only by all Moslems, but by all Arabic-speaking Jews and Christians in the Orient. But this does not necessarily mean that the *idea* expressed by the word is the same in each case. The ideas of Mohammed regarding God's existence, character and attributes came to him from three sources. First he undoubtedly had a knowledge of God from nature, and the passages of the Koran which set forth this natural theology are some of them the most beautiful and poetic in the whole book. Then, by his heredity and environment he could not free himself from the pagan ideas of Deity current among the Arabs. Lastly, he learned something of the God of Abraham and of the teachings of the New Testament from the Jews and Christians of Arabia and Abyssinia. From these three sources Mohammed obtained his theology, and to each source we can trace some of the ideas he sets forth in the Koran and in his table-talk concerning Allah. What was the re-

sult? This question we will try to answer in what follows. It remains to quote a few authoritative testimonies to show at the outset that the verdict is not unanimous regarding the ethical value and the philosophic truth of Mohammedan Monotheism.

Frederick Perry Noble, an authority on Islam in Africa, writes:[1] "The crowning benefit bestowed upon the benighted negro by Islam, its advocate exclaims, is the belief in the one true God. Is not this an advance, an immense advance, upon fetichism and idolatry? This depends on the content and effect of the idea of God in Islam and in African paganism. If the two members of the religious equation prove of equal value, the answer must be: $x = y$ and the gain is zero." This is very strong language. In the following paragraphs of that chapter of his book the author puts Allah in the balances against an African fetich and the scales hang nearly even! How different is this testimony from that of Canon Taylor, and Dr. Blyden and Bosworth Smith regarding Islam's blessing to dark Africa.[2] Major Osborne, in sketching the history of religion under the Khalifs of Bagdad, concludes: "The God of the Moslem is not a righteous God, but an arbitrary sovereign. I know that passages in the Koran can be produced wherein

[1] *The Redemption of Africa*, Vol. I., p. 73.

[2] See, for example, Blyden's *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, pp. 7, 28, 199-215, 277-299. London, 1888.

the righteousness of God is strongly insisted upon. But such passages have failed to mould to any great extent the practical religion of Islam, because (as I have already observed) the Koran is a book without moral gradations. Every institution and every precept stands upon the same ground—the will of God. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; and it is the veneration paid to a black stone, not to the One God, which denotes the high-water mark of the moral and intellectual life of the Moslem world."[1] Johannes Hauri, in his classical study of Islam, voices a similar sentiment and gives the clue to the favorable judgment of so many other writers. He says:[2] "What Mohammed tells us of God's omnipotence, omniscience, justice, goodness and mercy sounds, for the most part, very well indeed, and might easily awaken the idea that there is no real difference between his God and the God of Christianity. But Mohammed's monotheism was just as much a departure from true monotheism as the polytheistic ideas prevalent in the corrupt Oriental churches. Mohammed's idea of God is out and out deistic. God and the world are in exclusive, external and eternal opposition. Of an entrance of God into the world or of any sort of human fellowship with God he knows nothing. This is the reason Islam

[1] *Islam under the Khalifs,* pp. viii. and 138.

[2] *Der Islam in seinem Einfluss auf das Leben seiner Bekenner.* Leiden, 1882, pp. 44, 45.

received the warm sympathies of English deists and German rationalists; they found in its idea of God flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone." The following chapters will show whether this statement is overdrawn and whether Noble's indictment of Allah will stand.

II

ALLAH, THE DIVINE ESSENCE

> "The interpretation of God consists of two distinct yet complementary parts—a doctrine of God and of the Godhead. God is deity conceived in relation, over against the universe, its cause or ground, its law and end; but the Godhead is deity conceived according to His own nature as He is from within and for Himself."—*Principal Fairbairn.*

CONCERNING the real significance of the Arabic word *Allah* there has been much speculation and endless discussion among Moslem exegetes and lexicographers. The author of the Muheet-el-Muheet dictionary, a Christian, says: "Allah is the name of necessary Being. There are twenty different views as to the derivation of this name of the Supreme; the most probable is that its root is *iläh,* the past participle form, on the measure *fi'äl,* from the verb *ilaho* = to worship, to which the article was prefixed to indicate the supreme object of worship." When we open the pages of Ferozabadi, Beidhawi or Zamakhshari and read some of these *twenty* other derivations we find ourselves at the outset before an

unknown God. The intellectual difficulty was a real one to the Moslem exegete, as he must discover some root and some theory of derivation that is not in conflict with *his* accepted idea of God. Beidhawi, for example, suggests that *Allah* is derived "from an [invented] root *ilaha* = to be in perplexity, because the mind is perplexed when it tries to form the idea of the Infinite!" Yet more fanciful are the other derivations given and the Arabic student can satisfy his curiosity in Beidhawi, Vol. I., pp. 5 and 6.

According to the opinion of some Moslem theologians, it is infidelity (*kufr*) to hold that the word has any derivation whatever! This is the opinion of the learned in Eastern Arabia. They say "God is not begotten," and so His name cannot be derived. He is the first, and had an Arabic name before the creation of the worlds. Allah is an eternal combination of letters written on the throne in Arabic and each stroke and curve has mystical meaning. Mohammed, they teach, received the revelation of this name and was the first to preach the divine unity among the Arabs by declaring it. This kind of argument is of one piece with all that Moslems tell of "the days of ignorance" before the prophet. But history establishes beyond the shadow of a doubt that even the pagan Arabs, before Mohammed's time, knew their chief god by the name of *Allah* and even, in a sense, proclaimed His unity. In pre-Islamic literature, Christian or pagan, *ilah* is used for any god

and *Al-ilah* (contracted to *Allah*), *i.e.*, *ὁ θεός*, *the* god, was the name of the Supreme. Among the pagan Arabs this term denoted the chief god of their pantheon, the Kaaba, with its three hundred and sixty idols. Herodotus informs us (Lib. III., cap. viii.) that in his day the Arabs had two principal deities, *Orotal* and *Alilat*. The former is doubtless a corruption of *Allah Taál*, God most high, a term very common in the Moslem vocabulary; the latter is *Al Lat*, mentioned as a pagan goddess in the Koran. Two of the pagan poets of Arabia, Nabiga and Labid,[1] use the word *Allah* repeatedly in the sense of a supreme deity. Nabiga says (Diwan, poem I., verses 23, 24): "*Allah* has given them a kindness and grace which others have not. Their abode is *the* God (Al-ilah) Himself and their religion is strong," etc.

Labid says: "Neither those who divine by striking stones or watching birds, know what *Allah* has just created."[2]

Ash-Shahristani says of the pagan Arabs that some

[1]Brockelman in his *Geschichte der Arab. Literatur* remarks, Vol. I., p. 30, "Auch bei an-Nabiga und Lebid finden sich manche specifisch christliche Gedanken die uns beweisen dass das Christentum an der durch die Poesie repräsentierten geistigen Bildung seinen stillen Anteil hatte." Cheikho claims that Lebid was a Christian poet. Nabiga died before the Hegira.

[2]Quoted by Dr. St. Clair Tisdall, in the *Journal of the Victoria Institute*, Vol. XXV., p. 149. He gives the Arabic text of both Nabiga and Lebid's stanzas.

of them "believed in a Creator and a creation, but denied Allah's prophets and worshipped false gods, concerning whom they believed that in the next world they would become mediators between themselves and Allah." And Ibn Hisham, the earliest biographer of Mohammed whose work is extant, admits that the tribes of Kinanah and Koreish used the following words when performing the pre-Islamic ceremony of *ihlal*:[1] "We are present in thy service, O God. Thou hast no partner except the partner of thy dread. Thou ownest him and whatsoever he owneth."

As final proof, we have the fact that centuries before Mohammed the Arabian Kaaba, or temple at Mecca, was called *Beit-Allah,* the house of *God,* and not *Beit-el-Alihet,* the house of idols or gods. Now if even the *pagan* Arabs acknowledged Allah as supreme, surely the Hanifs (that band of religious reformers at Mecca which rejected all polytheism and sought freedom from sin by resignation to God's will) were not far from the idea of the Unity of God. It was henotheism[2] in the days of paganism; and the Hanifs led the way for Mohammed to preach absolute monotheism. The Koran often calls Abraham a Hanif and stoutly affirms that he was not a Jew or a Christian (Surahs 2:129; 3:60, 89; 6:162; 16:121, etc.). Among the Hanifs of Mohammed's

[1] *Sirat,* Part II., p. 27.

[2] "The adoration of one god above others as the specific tribal god."—C. P. Tiele.

time were Waraka, the prophet's cousin, and Zaid bin 'Amr, surnamed the Inquirer. Both exerted decided influence on Islam and its teaching.

Nöldeke thinks Mohammed was in doubt as to which name he would select for the supreme being and that he thought of adopting *Er-Rahman,* the merciful, as the proper name of God in place of Allah, because that was already used by the heathen. *Rahmana* was a favorite Hebrew name for God in the Talmudic period and in use among the Jews of Arabia.[1] On the Christian monuments found by Dr. Edward Glaser in Yemen, Allah is also mentioned. The Sirwah inscription (A.D. 542) opens with the words: "In the power of the All-merciful and His Messiah and the Holy Ghost,"[2] which shows that, at least in Yemen, Arabian Christians were not in error regarding the persons of the Trinity. One other term often used for *Allah* we will have occasion to study later. It is the word *Es-Samad* [the Eternal], and seems to come from the same root as *Samood,* the name of an idol of the tribe of 'Ad and mentioned in the poem of Yezid bin Sa'ad.[3] Hobal, the chief god of the Kaaba (and whom Dozy identifies with

[1] *Encyclop. Brit.,* Ninth edition, Vol. XVI., p. 549

[2] *Recent Research in Bible Lands,* by Hilprecht, p. 149. Does not this Christian introductory formula show whence Mohammed borrowed his *Bismillahi-er Rahman-er-Rahim?*

[3] *Taj-el-Aroos Dictionary,* Vol. II., p. 402. See note at the end of the chapter.

Baal),[1] is, strange to say, not mentioned in the Koran. Perhaps he was at this period already identified by the Meccans with Allah. This would explain Mohammed's silence on the subject.

We thus are led back to the sources from which the Arabian prophet drew his ideas of Allah; namely (as for all his other teaching), from Arabian paganism, Talmudic Judaism and Oriental Christianity. Islam is not original, not a ripe fruit, but rather a wild offshoot of foreign soil grafted on Judaism. It will not surprise us, therefore, if its ideas of God are immature and incomplete.

The passages of the Koran that teach the existence and unity of God (Allah) are either those that refer for proof of His unity to creation (Surahs 6: 96-100; 16:3-22; 21:31-36; 27:60-65, etc.), or state that polytheism and atheism are contrary to reason (Surah 23:119), or that dualism is self-destructive (Surah 21:22), or bring in the witness of former prophets (Surahs 30:29; 21:25; 39:65; 51:50-52). The dogma of absolute monotheism is held forth first against the pagan Arabs as, *e.g.,* in Surah 71:23, where Noah and Mohammed agree in condemning the idols of antediluvian polytheists. "Said Noah, My Lord, verily they have rebelled against me and followed him whose wealth and children have but

[1]See his book, *De Israeliten te Mekka* van David's tijd tot op de vijfde eeuw, etc., Haarlem, 1864, pp. 83-85, and also Pocock's *Spec. Hist. Arab.*, p. 98, ed. White.

added to his loss and they have plotted a great plot and said, Ye shall surely not leave your gods; ye shall surely neither leave *Wadd* nor *Suwah* nor *Yaghuth* nor *Ya'ook* nor *Nasr,*[1] and they led them astray," etc. But this dogma is no less aimed at the Jews whom the Koran accuses of deifying Ezra (Surah 9:30) and Christians who believe in the Trinity. This Trinity Mohammed misunderstood or misrepresented as consisting of Allah, *Jesus* and the Virgin Mary.[2] The deity of Christ is utterly rejected (Surahs 19:35, 36; 3:51, 52; 43:57-65; 5:19, etc.), and His incarnation and crucifixion denied, although not His miraculous birth (Surahs 19:22-24; 3:37-43, 47-50; 4:155, 156).

The word *Allah* is called by Moslem theologians *Ism-ul-That,* the name of the essence, or of the Being of God. All other titles, even that of *Rabb* (Lord) being considered *Isma-ul-Sifat, i.e.,* names of the attributes. In this first name, therefore, we have (barren though it be) the Moslem idea of the nature of God apart from His attributes and creation (in accordance with the motto at the head of this chapter), although at the same time in sharp contrast with Christian ideas of the Godhead.

As is evident from the very form of the Moslem creed their fundamental conception of Allah is nega-

[1]Of course these were *Arabian* idols, but the Koran is full of such strange anachronisms.

[2]See Chapter VI.

tive. God is unique, as well as a unit, and has no relations to any creature that partake of resemblance. The statement in Genesis that man was created in the divine image is to the Moslem blasphemy. Allah is defined by a series of negations. As popular song has it—

> "Whatsoever your mind can conceive,
> That Allah is not you may well believe."

Mohammed, outside of the Koran, was silent regarding the nature of God's being. "For while traditions have been handed down in abundance which give the responses of the Prophet to inquiries concerning prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage there is not one having reference to the being [and attributes] of God. This is a fact acknowledged by all those most profoundly versed in Traditional lore."[1] The great Imams are agreed regarding the danger and impiety of studying or discussing the nature of the being of God. They, therefore, when speaking of Allah's being, fall back on negations.

The idea of absolute sovereignty and ruthless omnipotence (borrowed, as we shall see, from the nature of Allah's attributes) are at the basis. For the rest his character is impersonal—that of an infinite, eternal, vast nomad. God is not a body. God is not a

[1] *The Khalifs of Bagdad*, p. 136. I have put his words "and attributes" in brackets. Osborne's statement is too strong. There are traditions, although not many, on Allah's attributes.

spirit. Neither has God a body nor has he a spirit. The Imam El-Ghazzali says: "Allah is not a body endued with form nor a substance circumscribed with limits or determined by measure. Neither does He resemble bodies, as they are capable of being measured or divided. Neither is He a substance, nor do substances exist in Him; neither is He an accident, nor do accidents exist in Him. Neither is He like to anything that exists; neither is anything like Him. His nearness is not like the nearness of bodies nor is His essence like the essence of bodies. *Neither does He exist in anything nor does anything exist in Him.*"[1]

The words "There is no God but Allah" occur in Surah Mohammed, verse 21, but the Surah which Moslems call the Surah of the Unity of God is the 112th. According to Tradition, this chapter is Mohammed's definition of Allah. Beidhawi says: "Mohammed (on him be prayers and peace) was asked concerning his Lord and then this Surah came down." Zamakhshari says: "Ibn Abbas related that the Koreish said, O Mohammed, describe to us your Lord whom you invite us to worship; then this Surah was revealed." As a specimen of Moslem exegesis, here is the Surah with the comments first of Beidhawi and then of Zamakhshari; the words of

[1]See *El Maksadu-l-asna* by this famous Moslem scholastic. An extract is found in Ockley's *History of the Saracens* and quoted in Hughes' *Dict. of Islam.*

the Koran are put in italics and the translation is literal:[1]

"Say, He is God, One. God is the predicate of He is, and One is in apposition to it or is a second predicate. *God is 'eternal'* (*Samad*), that is, God is He to whom men betake themselves for their needs. *He does not beget,* because of the impossibility of His homogeneousness. *And is not begotten,* because of the impossibility of anything happening concerning Him. *And there is not to Him a single equal, i.e.,* equivalent or similar one. The expression 'to Him' is joined to the word 'equal' and precedes it because the chief purpose of the pronouns is to express the denial. And the reason for putting the word 'single' last, although it is the subject of the verb, is that it may stand separate from 'to Him.'" The idea of Beidhawi seems to be that even in the grammatical order of the words there must be entire and absolute separation between Allah and creation!

Zamakhshari interprets likewise as follows: *"God is one,* unified (unique?) in His divinity, in which no one shares, and He is the one whom all seek since they need Him and He needs nobody. *He does not beget,* because He has none of His own genus, and so possesses no female companion of His own kind, and

[1]Beidhawi, the most celebrated of all Sunni exegetes, died at Tabriz in 685 A.H. Zamakhshari died 538 A.H., and spent most of his life at Mecca. He was for a time a free-thinker, but his commentary is held equal to that of Beidhawi.

consequently the two of them propagate. This is indicated by God's saying, 'How can there be offspring to Him and He has no female companion.[1] *And He is not begotten.* Because everything born is an occurrence and a (material) body. God, however, is ancient, there is no beginning to His existence and He is not a body. *And He has no equal, i.e.,* no likeness or resemblance. It is allowed to explain this of companionship in marriage and to deny a female consort."[2]

This, then, is the definition of the Essence of God, according to the Koran and the best commentaries. How far such negations come short of the sublime statements of revelation: God is a Spirit; God is light; God is love.

[1]I have purposely used the word *God* for Allah in my translation and capitalized *He* to show how shocking such ideas seem to the Christian consciousness.

[2]On the word *Samad* (Eternal) there is a curious note in the biography of Mohammed known as *Insan-el Ayoon* (Vol. I., p. 372), margin: "*Samad* means that which has no insides or inside organs and was the name given by Mohammed to God in reply to the Nejran Christians who affirmed that Jesus ate food; for God needs no food and has no organs of digestion!" The same explanation of the word is given by Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Ibn Zobeir. According to Al Shôbi, it means one who neither eats nor drinks. Others say it means one who has no successor. Al Suddi explains it to be one who is sought after for favors and presents. (See further Dr. Hartwig Hirschfeld's *New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Quran,* p. 42, note. London, 1902; Royal Asiatic Society.)

III

THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

> "I make but little of Mohammed's praises of Allah, which many praise; they are borrowed, I suppose, mainly from the Hebrew, at least they are far surpassed there. But the eye that flashes direct into the heart of things and sees the truth of them; this to me is a deeply interesting object. Great Nature's own gift."—*Carlyle, in "Hero Worship."*

THE attributes of God are called by Moslems *Ismā-ul-Sifat* and are also called in the Koran *Isma-ul-Husna,* the excellent names. We read in Surah 7:179: "But God's are the excellent names; call on Him then thereby and leave those who pervert His names." The number of these names or attributes of Allah is given by Tradition as ninety-nine. Abu Huraira relates that Mohammed said, "Verily, there are ninety-nine names of God and whoever recites them shall enter Paradise." In the same tradition these names are mentioned, but the number is arbitrary and the lists of the names differ in various Mos-

lem books.[1] It is the custom of many pious Moslems to employ in their devotions a rosary of ninety-nine beads to represent these names, and the repetition of them is called *Thikr,* or remembrance. The latter is the chief religious exercise among the various schools of dervishes.

We will now give these names in order with the place where they occur in the Koran and brief comment where necessary. Edwin Arnold has made so much of these *Pearls of the Faith* in his poem that we need to get back to the *Moslem* idea of these attributes. His *Pearls of the Faith* is as one-sided a presentation of Islam as his *Light of Asia* is of Buddhism.

1. *Er-Rahman*—The Merciful. (Surah 1:1, etc.)

2. *Er-Rahim*—The Compassionate. Both of these names are from the same root and are very frequently used in the Koran. They occur as the opening formula, "In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate," before every Surah of the Koran except the ninth. Beidhawi says that *Er-Rahman* is a more exalted attribute than *Er-Rahim,* because it not only contains five letters in Arabic,

[1]Compare the lists as given in *Mishkat-el Misabih, Al Mustatraf,* Hughes' *Dict. of Islam,* Nofel's *Sinajet el Tarb.,* Arnold's *Pearls of the Faith,* etc.; Ahmed bin Ali el Bûni's *Shems-ul Múarif* is one of many books on the ninety-nine names of God. In this book these names are written in talismanic form, and one of these talismans is given in our frontispiece.

while Rahim only has four, but it expresses that universal attribute of mercy which the Almighty extends to all men, the wicked and the good, believers and unbelievers. This is a noble thought.

3. *El Malik*—The King, or the Possessor, used often in the Koran as in the first Surah, "King of the day of judgment." In Surah 43:77, however, the same word is used for the angel who presides over hell. Is this latter use of the word allied to Molech, the fire-god of Syria?

4. *El Kuddūs*—The Holy. Only *once* used of Allah in the Koran (Surah 59:23), "He is God beside whom there is no deity, the King, the Holy." The Taj-el-Aroos dictionary instead of defining this important attribute discusses the various readings of its vowel-points! (See the next chapter.) The Holy Spirit is a term frequently used in the Koran, but is in no case applied to Deity.[1]

5. *Es-Salam*—The Peace, or the Peace-maker. The latter significance is given by Zamakhshari. Beidhawi again explains it *by a negation,* "He who is free from all loss and harm." Used only in Surah 59:20.

6. *El-Mu'min*—The Faithful. (Surah 59:28.)

[1]Nine times the word Spirit or Holy Spirit is said to refer to the Angel Gabriel (Surahs 2 : 81; 2 : 254; 5 : 109; 16 : 2; 16:104; 26:193; 70:4; 97:4; 19:17); three times to Jesus Christ (4:169; 21:91; 66:12), in this case without the epithet holy; the other cases are left in doubt by the commentators. In none of them does even "Spirit" apply to deity.

7. *El-Muhaimin*—The Protector. (Surah 59:23.)

8. *El-Aziz*—The Mighty One. Very frequently used; *e.g.,* Surahs 42:2, 3, 18; 46:1, etc. It is one of the dozen or more names that express Allah's power.

9. *El-Jabbār*—The All-Compelling. (Surah 59:23.) The word is also translated, The Giant or the Absolute ruler. What Moslems think the word means is evident from the teachings of the sect, which denies all free agency to man, and who call themselves after this name, *Jabariyah.* (See Hughes' *Dict. of Islam* in loco.)

10. *El-Mutakabbir*—The Proud. This word when used of a human being always implies haughtiness, and Zamakhshari defines it (Surah 59:23), "Supreme in pride and greatness or the One who is haughty above the wickedness of His slaves."

11. *El-Khālik*—The Creator.

12. *El-Bari*—The Maker.

13. *El-Musawwir*—The Fashioner. These three are used in succession for Allah as creator in Surah 59:23. The commentators take pains to explain away any *nearness* of the Creator to the creature in the last term used.

14. *El-Ghāfer*—The Forgiver, sometimes given as Al Ghaffār. Both have the same significance, but the latter, as well as *Al Ghafūr,* are intensive. (Surah 2:225.) All are frequently used.

15. *El-Kahār*—The Dominant. (Surah 13:17.)

16. *El-Wahāb*—The Bestower. (Surah 3:6, etc.) This name is commonly used with *Abd* as a surname among the Arabs, "Slave of the Bountiful."

17. *Er-Razzak*—The Provider. Once used in Surah 51:58.

18. *El-Fattah*—The Opener. (Surah 34:25.) This name is inscribed over gates and doors, on the title-pages of books and is used as the first copy-book lesson for boys at school.

19. *El-'Alîm*—The Knowing One. (Surah 35:43.) Frequently used in nearly every long Surah of the Koran.

20. *El-Kabidh*—The Grasper, the Restrainer.

21. *El-Bāsit*—The Spreader or Uncloser of the hand. These two names are complementary. The former occurs not in the Koran as a noun, but was put in the list in reference to a passage in the Surah of the Cow. The latter is found in Surah 13:15, and there means He who dispenses riches.

22. *El-Khafidh*—The Abaser. (Surah ?)

23. *Er-Rafia'*—The Exalter. (Surah 3:48.) In reference to the translation of Jesus Christ.

24. *El-Mu'izz*—The Strengthener. The word does not occur in the Koran, but the idea is referred to in Surah 3:25: "Thou strengthenest whom Thou pleasest."

25. *El-Mŭthill*—The One-who-l e a d s-a s t r a y. (Surahs 4:90; 4:142; 17:99; 18:6, and fre-

quently elsewhere.) "God misleadeth whom He pleaseth," is a common phrase in the Koran.

26. *Es Samia*—The Hearer. (Surah 40:21, etc.)

27. *El-Basir*—The Seer. (Surah 40:21 and frequently elsewhere.) According to Surah 31, Allah has present vision of five secret things: the day of judgment, and the times of rain, the child hid in the womb, what happens to-morrow, and where every mortal dies.

28. *El Hakîm*—The Wise, the Only Wise. Very often used, as in Surah 2:123, *e.g.,* "Thou art the mighty and the wise." It is used in every-day Arabic for a philosopher or a physician.

29. *El 'Adl*—The Just. It is remarkable and very significant that this title does not occur in the Koran, but is put in the list by Tradition. The word *'Adl,* Justice, occurs twelve times only, and is never used of the righteous *acts* of God and only once (Surah 5:115) of His words. In every other case it refers to human equity or faithfulness (as in 4:128) toward one's wives in their marriage rights, etc.

30. *El-Latif*—The Subtle. (Surah 6:103.) Edwin Arnold translates this word "Gracious One" and hangs to this invention a verse or two of Christian thought on God's grace to sinners. Zamakhshari gives the Moslem idea of this word when he says: "He is too subtle (too ethereal) for eyes to see Him." (El Kishaf in loco.)

31. *El-Khabîr*—The Cognizant. (Surah 6: 103.)

32. *El-Halîm*—The Clement. (Surah 2:225.) "He will not catch you up for a casual word in your oaths, but He will catch you up for what your hearts have earned; but God is forgiving and *clement.*" Mohammed's idea of clemency!

33. *El-'Adhim*—The Grand. (Surah 2:257.)

34. *El-Ghafūr*—The Forgiving. (Surah 35:27.)

35. *Esh-Shakŭr*—"The Acknowledger of Thanksgiving." This is more correct than to translate The Grateful. (Surah 35:27.) "That He may pay them their hire. . . . Verily He is Forgiving and Grateful."

36. *El-'Ali*—The Exalted. (Surah 2:257.)

37. *El-Kabîr*—The Great. (Surah 34:22.) This is never used by Arabic-speaking Christians as a title for the Godhead, since it really means big in size or station. Zamakhshari says (Vol. II., p. 231): "Al-Kabir means the possessor of pride."

38. *El-Hafidh*—The Guardian. (Surah 86:3.) This name is often put over house-doors.

39. *El-Mukît*—The Feeder, the Maintainer. (Surah 4:88.)

40. *El-Hasîb*—The Reckoner. Occurs three times. (Surahs 4: 7, 88; 33: 39.) Arnold's comment here is thoroughly Mohammedan:

> "Laud Him as Reckoner casting up th' account
> And making little merits largely mount."

41. *El-Jalîl*—The Majestic. (Surah 55:25.)

42. *El-Karîm*—The Generous. (Surah 96:3. "He is the most generous.")

43. *Er-Rakîb*—The Watchful. (Surah 4:1.)

44. *El-Mujîb*—The Answerer (of prayer). (Surah 11:64.) Compare comment of Zamakhshari in loco.

45. *El-Wasia*—The Capacious. (Surah 2:248.)

46. *El-Hākim*—The Judge. "The most just of judges (or rulers)." (Surahs 95:8 and 7:85.)

47. *El-Wadŭd*—The Affectionate. Occurs only *twice* in the Koran. (Surahs 11:92 and 85:14.)

48. *El-Majîd*—The Glorious. (Surah 11:76 and elsewhere.)

49. *El-Ba'ith*—The Awakener or Raiser; used frequently in the verbal form in regard to the resurrection of the body. (Surah 22:7 by inference.)

50. *Esh-Shahîd*—The Witness. Frequently used. (Surah 3:93.)

51. *El-Hak*—The Truth. (Surah 22:62.) According to orthodox Tradition, a lie is justifiable in three cases: "To reconcile those who quarrel, to satisfy one's wife and in case of war." (*El Hidayah,* Vol. IV., p. 81.) And Abu Hanifah alleges that if a man should swear "by the *truth* of God" this does not constitute an oath. Imam Mohammed agrees with him. (Oaths, Hughes' *Dict.*, p. 438.) Of absolute truth in Deity or in ethics the Moslem mind has very

distorted ideas and Tradition affords a thousand examples of Moslem teaching in this regard.

52. *El-Wakîl*—The Agent. (Surah 4:83.)

53. *El-Kawi*—The Strong. (Surah 11:69.) Used of physical strength.

54. *El-Mutîn*—The Firm; in the sense of a fortress. Used in Surah 51:58: "God is the provider. . . . The Firm."

55. *El-Walî*—The Helper. (Surah 22: last verse.) By implication. I cannot find it elsewhere.

56. *El-Hamid*—The Laudable. Frequent. (Surah 11:76.)

57. *El-Muhsi*—The Counter. Only by reference to Surah 36:11, which speaks of God "reckoning up."

58. *El-Mubdi*—The Beginner. Reference to Surah 85:13.

59. *El-Mŭeed*—The Restorer. Reference to Surah 85:13.

60. *El-Muhyi*—The Quickener or Life-giver.

61. *El-Mumît*—The Slayer. These two names are in a pair and occur together in Surah 2:26 in a verbal form. The former also occurs, Surahs 30:49 and 41:39, in both cases referring to quickening the soil after rain as proof of the resurrection.

62. *El-Hai*—The Living. (Surah 3:1.) Very frequent.

63. *El-Kayŭm*—The Self-Subsisting. (Surah 3:1.) Beidhawi and Zamakhshari both speak of the

latter term in a purely *physical* way. "He who always stands up," *i.e.,* does not need rest or sleep. Compare the same words as used in the verse of the Throne, Surah 2d, and the commentaries.

64. *El-Wâjid*—The Inventor or Maker. The word does not occur in the Koran.

65. *El-Mugheeth*—The Refuge or the Helper. The word does not occur in the Koran.

66. *El-Wāhid*—The One. (Frequently, as in 2:158.)

67. *Es-Samad*—The Eternal. (Surah 112.) According to the dictionaries and some commentaries, the word means "One to whom one repairs in exigencies," and hence the Lord, the Eternal One.

68. *El-Kadîr*—The Powerful. (Surah 2:19, and in many other places.) The word is from the same root as *Kadr,* fate, predestination; and Zamakhshari, in commenting on Surah 2:19, leaves no doubt that the term used means to him "The One-who-predestines-all."

69. *El-Muktadir*—The Prevailer or Overcomer. Used three times in the Koran. (Surahs 18:43; 54:42; 5:55.)

70. *El-Mukaddim*—The Approacher or Bringer forward.

71. *El-Muākhir*—The Deferrer. This pair of titles does not occur in the Koran.

72. *El-Awwal*—The First.

73. *El-Akhir*—The Last.

74. *El-Dhahir*—The Substance.

75. *El-Bātin*—The Essence. These four divine titles are known by the technical appellation of "The mothers of the attributes," being regarded as fundamental and all-comprehensive. All four occur together in Surah 57:3. This verse is a great favorite among the Mystics of Islam.

76. *El-Wali*—The Governor. (Surah 13:12.)

77. *El-Muta'ali*—The Lofty One; better, He-who-tries-to-be-the-Highest. (Surah 13:10.)

78. *El-Bărr*—The Beneficent. (Surah 52:27.) The word used for *Righteous* is *El Bār* and does not occur in the Koran. Once only is this name used.

79. *Et-Tawwāb*—The Relenting—one who turns frequently. Used four times in Surah 2d and twice in the 9th Surah. Also, beautifully, in Surah 4:119: "He has also turned in mercy unto the three who were left behind, so that the earth, spacious as it is, became too strait for them; and their souls became so straitened within them that there was no refuge from God, but unto Himself. Then was He turned to them that they might turn to Him. Verily, God is He that turneth (*At-Tawwāb*) the merciful."

80. *El-Muntakim*—The Avenger. (Surah 32:22.) Also Surahs 43:40 and 44:15.

81. *El-Afuw*—The Pardoner. Literally, the Eraser or Cancellor. (Surah 4:51.)

82. *Er-Ra'oof*—The Kind or Indulgent. Frequently used. (Surah 2:138.)

83. *Malik-ul-Mulk*—Ruler of the Kingdom. (Surah 3:25.)

84. *Dhu-al-Jilal*—Possessor of Majesty. (Surah 55:78.)

85. *El-Mŭksit*—The Equitable. It does not occur in the Koran, but in Tradition.

86. *El-Jāmia'*—The Gatherer. (Surah 4:139.)

87. *El-Ghani*—The Rich. (Surah 60:6.)

88. *El-Mŭghni*—The Enricher. (Surah 4:129.)

89. *El-Mu'ti*—The Giver. (Referred to Surah 108:1.)

90. *El-Mānia'*—The Withholder. Not in the Koran.

91. *Edh-Dhŭr*—The Harmful. Not in the Koran.

92. *En-Nāfia'*—The Profiter. Not in the Koran. Although these names, and others, are not found in the Koran they belong to Allah's attributes on authority of the Prophet and are used especially in invocations and incantations.

93. *En-Nur*—The Light. Used only in the remarkable 35th verse of the 24th Surah. Quoted elsewhere with comment. The idea seems borrowed from the Old Testament and the golden candlestick.

94. *El-Hādi*—The Guide. (From Surah 1:5, etc.)

95. *El-Azili*—The Eternal-in-the-Past. Arabic speech has another word, *Abadi,* for eternal future, and a third, *Sarmadi,* to include both.

96. *El-Baki*—The Enduring. (Surah 28: last verse by inference.)

97. *El-Warith*—The Inheritor of all things. Not in the Koran, but implied in various passages.

98. *Er-Rashîd*—The Director. It occurs only once in the Koran, and is not there applied to God. (Surah 11:80.) "Is there not among you one who can rightly direct?" The word is still in common use as a proper name among the Arabs.

99. *Es-Sabŭr*—The Patient. (Surah 3:15?)

The word *Rabb,* Lord (although it is also an attribute, according to the Moslem ideas of the Unity), is not mentioned among the ninety-nine names. It is, however, used most frequently of all the divine titles and is combined with other words in Moslem theology, such as: Lord of Glory, Lord of the Universe, Lord of Lords, Lord of Slaves (*i.e.,* His servants). It is not without significance to note that later many of these divine titles were applied to Mohammed himself by the pious, and in the list of his two hundred and one titles there are a score of the ninety-nine beautiful names![1]

[1]See *Mishkat-el-Misabih* and any book of Moslem prayers or devotions for proof. (*Ismà-en-Nebi.*)

IV

ALLAH'S ATTRIBUTES ANALYZED AND EXAMINED

> "And the thunder proclaimeth His perfection, with His praise; the angels likewise fear Him. And He sendeth the thunderbolts and striketh with them whom He pleaseth whilst they dispute concerning God; for He is mighty in power."—*The Koran* (Surah 13: 13).
>
> "There is none of all that are in the heavens and the earth but he shall come unto the Compassionate as a slave."—*The Koran* (Surah 19 : 94).

THESE verses from the Koran are a fit introduction to the study of Allah's attributes; they express the effect those attributes are intended to have and do have on His worshippers and explain in a measure the reason for the usual Moslem classification of God's ninety-nine names. Through fear of death and terror of Allah's mighty power the pious Moslem is all his life subject to bondage.

By some the attributes are divided into three classes (as their rosary is into three sections), *i.e.*, the attributes of wisdom, of power and of goodness.

But the more common division is into two: *Isma-ul-Jalaliyah* and *Isma-ul-Jemaliyah,* terrible attributes and glorious attributes. The former are more numerous and more emphasized than the latter, not only in the Koran but in Tradition and in daily life. If we try to classify the names given in the last chapter we find the following result: Seven of the names (*viz.,* 66, 67, 72, 73, 74, 75 and 86) describe Allah's unity and Absolute being. Five speak of Him as Creator or Originator of all nature (*viz.,* 11, 12, 13, 62 and 63). There are twenty-four titles which characterize Allah as merciful and gracious (to believers) (*viz.,* 1, 2, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 32, 34, 35, 38, 42, 47, 56, 60, 78, 79, 81, 82, 89, 92, 94, 98, 99) and we are glad to acknowledge that these are indeed *beautiful* names and that they are used often and beautifully in the Koran. On the other hand, there are *thirty-six* names to describe Mohammed's idea of Allah's power and pride and absolute sovereignty (*viz.,* 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 33, 36, 37, 39, 41, 45, 48, 49, 53, 54, 58, 59, 61, 65, 68, 69, 76, 77, 83, 84, 87, 88, 95, 96 and 97). And in addition to these "terrible attributes" there are five which describe Allah as hurting and avenging (*viz.,* 22, 25, 80, 90, 91). He is a God who abases, leads astray, avenges, withholds His mercies, and works harm. In all these doings He is independent and all-powerful.

Finally, there are *four* terms used, which may be said in a special sense to refer to the *moral* or *forensic*

in deity (*viz.*, 4, 29, 51 and 85); although we admit that the merciful attributes are in a sense *moral* attributes. Of these only two occur in the Koran, and both are of doubtful significance in Moslem theology! While we find that the "terrible" attributes of God's power occur again and again in the Koran, the net total of the moral attributes is found in *two* verses, which mention that Allah is Holy and Truthful, *i.e.*, in the Moslem sense of those words. What a contrast to the Bible! The Koran shows and Tradition illustrates that Mohammed had in a measure a correct idea of the *physical* attributes (I use the word in the theological sense) of Deity; but he had a false conception of His moral attributes or no conception at all. He saw God's power in nature, but never had a glimpse of His holiness and justice. The reason is plain. Mohammed had no true idea of the nature of sin and its consequences. There is perfect unity in this respect between the prophet's book and his life. Arnold says (*Der Islam*, p. 70): "Das Attribut der Heiligkeit wird im Koran durchaus ignorirt; alles was über die unnahbare Reinheit und Heiligkeit dessen der in der Bibel als der Dreimal Heilige dargestellt wird, gesagt ist läszt sich von jedem ehrenhaften menschen sagen." The attribute of holiness is ignored in the Koran; everything put forward concerning the unapproachable purity and holiness of Him who is represented as Thrice Holy in the Bible can be applied to any respectable man. The Koran is

silent on the nature of sin not only, but tells next to nothing about its origin, result and remedy. In this respect the latest Sacred Book of the East stands in marked contrast with all the other sacred books of the heathen and the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments. This was noticed as early as the days of the Reformation; for Melancthon says in an introduction to a Latin Koran that he thinks Mohammed "was inspired by Satan, because he does not explain what sin is and sheweth not the reason of human misery."[1]

The passages of the Koran that treat of sin are the few following: Surahs 4:30; 2:80; 4:46; 14:39; also Surahs 2:284-286; 9:116; 69:35; 86:9; 70:19-25, and 47:2, 3.

The nearest approach to a definition that can be gathered from these passages is that sin is a wilful violation of known law or, as Wherry puts it: "Sin, according to most Moslem authorities, is a conscious act committed against known law; wherefore sins of ignorance are not numbered in the catalogue of crimes." This idea of sin gives rise to the later Judæic distinction of sins great and small (Matt. 22:36, cf. Surah 4:30, etc.) on which are based endless speculations of Moslem commentators. Some say there are seven great sins: idolatry, murder, false charge of adultery, wasting the substance of

[1]Quoted in *Literary Remains of Emanuel Deutsch*, London, 1874, p. 62.

orphans, usury, desertion from *Jihad,* and disobedience to parents. Others say there are seventeen, still others catalogue seven hundred! Without entering into the fruitless discussion of what constitutes a sin, great or small, it is to be noted that to the Moslem all sins except the *Kebira,* "great sins," are regarded with utter carelessness and no qualm of conscience. Lying, deception, anger, lust and such like are all smaller and lighter offences; all these will be "forgiven easily" if only men keep clear from great sins.

Another important distinction between the scriptural doctrine of sin and Moslem teaching and which has direct bearing on our interpretation of Allah's attributes is the terms used. The most common word used in the Koran for sin is *thanib,*[1] although other terms are used, especially *harām* (forbidden).

The words "permitted" and "forbidden" have superseded the use of "guilt" and "transgression;" the reason for this is found in the Koran itself. Nothing is right or wrong by nature, but becomes such by the fiat of the Almighty. What Allah forbids is sin, even should he forbid what seems to the human conscience right and lawful. What Allah allows is not sin and cannot be sin *at the time he allows it,* though it may have been before or after. One has

[1]This word is used for Mohammed's sins and those of other "prophets," and yet nearly all Moslems hold that all of the prophets, including Mohammed, are sinless!

only to argue the matter of polygamy with any Moslem mullah to have the above statements confirmed. To the common mind there is, indeed, no distinction whatever between the ceremonial law and the moral; nor is it easy to find such a distinction even implied in the Koran. It is as great an offence to pray with unwashen hands as to tell a lie, and "pious" Moslems who nightly break the seventh commandment (according to their own lax interpretation of it) will shrink from a tin of English meat for fear they be defiled with swine's flesh. As regards the moral code Islam is phariseeism translated into Arabic.

The lack of all distinction between the ceremonial and moral law comes out most of all in the traditional sayings of the prophet. These sayings, we must remember, have nearly equal authority with the Koran itself. Take two examples: "The prophet, upon whom be prayers and peace, said, One dirhem of usury which a man eats, knowing it to be so, is more grievous than thirty-six fornications; and whosoever has been so nourished is worthy of hell-fire." "The taking of interest has seventy parts of guilt, the least of which is as if a man commits incest with his mother." "The trousers of a man must be to the middle of his leg . . . but whatever is below that is in hell-fire."[1]

To understand the great lack of the moral element

[1] *Mishkat-el-Misabih* in loco, and Osborn's *Islam under the Khalifs of Bagdad*, p. 63.

in the attributes of Allah we must go still further. In the Moslem system and according to the Koran, fortified by Tradition, *all sin is, after all, a matter of minor importance.* It is the repetition of the creed that counts, and not the reformation of character. To repeat the *kilimah,* "There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is Allah's prophet," *ipso facto* constitutes one a true believer. All other considerations are of less import. So confidently is this asserted by Moslem teachers that they say, even if one should repeat the *kilimah* accidentally or by compulsion, it would make him a Moslem. In a fanatic company, I was told, it would be decidedly dangerous for a non-Moslem to say "the creed" even casually in conversation because, so they said, they would "then take the Nasrani by force and circumcise him." Repeating the creed is the door into the religion of Mohammed.

The Koran teaches that the first sinner was Adam (Surah 2:35), and yet the general belief of Moslems to-day is that all the prophets, including Adam, *were without sin.* Especially is the latter asserted in regard to Mohammed, the seal of the prophets; Koran, Tradition, and history to the contrary notwithstanding. The portion of unrepentant sinners is hell-fire (Surahs 18:51; 19:89 and 20:76); the punishment is eternal (43:74-78) and there is then no repentance possible (26:91-105). All the wealth of Arabic vocabulary is exhausted in Mohammed's fearful and

particularized descriptions of the awful torments of the doomed.

And for deeper tints in the horrible picture one has only to read the commentators, who also delight in describing the situation of the unbelievers. Hell has seven divisions, each with special terrors and purpose and name. *Jahannum* is the Moslem's purgatory; *Laza* blazes for Christians; *El Hatumah* is hot for the Jews; *Sa'eer* for the Sabeans; *Sakar* scorches the Magi; *El Jahim* is the huge, hot fire for idolaters, and *Hawiyah* the bottomless pit for hypocrites. So say the commentaries, but the Koran only gives the names and says that "each portal has his party."

It is remarkable that nearly all the references to hell-punishment are in the Medinah Surahs, and therefore belong to the latter period of the prophet's life. The allusions to hell in the Mecca Surahs are very brief and "are in every case directed against unbelievers in the prophet's mission and not against sin." (Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam,* p. 171.)

The conclusion we come to, both from the study of the Koran and of Tradition, is that *Allah does not appear bound by any standard of justice.* For example, the worship of the creature is heinous to the Moslem mind and yet Allah punished Satan for not being willing to worship Adam. (Surah 2:28-31.) Allah is merciful in winking at the sins of His favorites, such as the prophets and those who fight in His bat-

tles, but is the quick avenger of all infidels and idolaters. He reveals truth to His prophets, but also abrogates it, changes the message, or makes them forget it. (Surah 2:105.) The whole teaching of Moslem exegetes on the subject of *Nasikh* and *Mansookh,* or the Abrogated verses of the Koran, is utterly opposed to the idea of God's immutability and truth. There are twenty cases given in which one revelation superseded, contradicted or abrogated a previous revelation to Mohammed.[1] Allah's moral law changes, like His ceremonial law, according to times and circumstances. He is the Clement. Moslem teachers have in my presence utterly denied that Allah is subject to an absolute standard of moral rectitude. He can do what He pleases. The Koran often asserts this. Not only physically, but morally, He is *almighty,* in the Moslem sense of the word. Allah, the Koran says, is the best plotter. Allah mocks and deceives. Allah "makes it easy" for those who accept the prophet's message. (Surahs 8:29; 3:53; 27:51; 86:15; 16:4; 14:15; 9:51.)

Al-Ghazzali says: "Allah's justice is not to be compared with the justice of men. For a man may be supposed to act unjustly by invading the possession of another, but no injustice can be conceived on the part of God. It is in His power to pour down upon men torments, and if He were to do it, His jus-

[1]See Hughes' *Dict. of Islam,* p. 520. Jalalu-Din in his *Itkan* gives the list of passages.

tice could not be arraigned. Yet He rewards those that worship Him for their obedience on account of His promise and beneficence, not of their merit or of necessity, *since there is nothing which He can be tied to perform;* nor can any injustice be supposed in Him nor can He be under any obligation to any person whatsoever."[1] According to one tradition, the seven chief attributes of Deity are: Life, knowledge, purpose, power, hearing, sight and speech.[2] Even granted that these are used in a superlative sense they would still describe only *an Intelligent Giant.* Muhammed-al-Burkawi in his book on these seven chief attributes uses language that leaves no doubt of *his* idea of what the Koran teaches. He says: "Allah can annihilate the universe if it seems good to Him and recreate it in an instant. He receives neither profit nor loss from whatever happens. If all the infidels became believers and all the wicked pious He would gain nothing. And if all believers became infidels it would not cause Him loss. He can annihilate even heaven itself. He sees all things, *even the steps of a black ant on a black rock in a dark night."* This last expression shows how the idea of God's omniscience remains purely *physical,* even in its highest aspect. How much loftier is the thought of God's omniscience in the 139th Psalm than in any

[1]Al Maksad-ul-Asna, quoted in Ockley's *Hist. of the Saracens.*

[2]Hughes' *Dict. of Islam,* p. 27.

verse of the Koran or any passage of the Traditions. In the Koran, God's eye is a big microscope by which He examines His creatures. In the Bible, His eye is a flame of fire laying bare the deepest thoughts and intents of the heart. The Koran has no word for conscience. It is the same when we go to the Koran, or to Tradition, for a description of God's *power*. The wonderful "Verse of the Throne," which is often quoted as proof of Mohammed's noble ideas, is an instance in point. The verse reads: "God there is no god but He, the living, the self-subsistent. Slumber takes Him not nor sleep. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him save by His permission? He knows what is before them and what behind them, and they comprehend not aught of His knowledge but of what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth and it tires Him not to guard them both, for He is the high and the grand." Zamakhshari, after explaining on this passage why Allah does not need physical sleep, tells the following Tradition: "The children of Israel asked Moses why God did not slumber or sleep or take rest?[1] In reply to their question God told Moses to remain awake for three days and nights and at the end of that time

[1]Moslems are often offended at the verses in Genesis and in Exodus which speak of God "resting" the seventh day and tell our Bible colporteurs that such statements are "kŭfr," *i.e.*, infidelity. God never rests, never needs rest.

to hold two glass bottles in his hands. He did so, and, overcome with drowsiness, smashed the one against the other. Tell your people, said Allah, that I hold in one hand the seven heavens and in the other the seven worlds; if my eyes should slumber, verily the universe would smash as did Moses' bottles."

What must have been Mohammed's idea of the character of God when he named Him The Proud, The All-compelling, The Slayer, The Deferrer, The Indulgent and The Harmful?

Nor can the mind reconcile such attributes with those of goodness and compassion without doing violence to the text of the Koran itself. Some Moslem theologians, therefore, teach that all the good attributes are exercised toward believers and the terrible ones toward unbelievers, making of Allah a sort of two-faced Janus. In the Moslem doctrine of the Unity all real unity is absent. The attributes of Allah can no more be made to agree than the Surahs which he sent down to Mohammed; but in neither case does this lack of agreement, according to Moslems, reflect on Allah's character.

When God is once called The Holy in the Koran (Surah 59), the term does not signify *moral* purity or perfection, as is evident from the exegetes and from any *Mohammedan* Arabic lexicon.

Beidhawi's comment on the word is: "Holy means the complete absence of anything that would make

Him less than He is."[1] All the commentaries I have seen *leave out* the idea of moral purity and use at the most the word *tahir* as a synonym; this means ceremonially clean, circumcised, etc. In the dictionaries, too, the idea of holiness, for *kŭddŭs,* in the Old Testament sense, is absent. The *Taj-el-Aroos* and the *Muheet-el-Muheet* dictionaries tell us *kŭddŭs* is pure (*tahir*); but when our hopes were awakened to find a spiritual idea, the next definition reads: "*kaddŭs,* a vessel used to wash the parts of the body in the bath; this is the special name for such a vessel in Hejaz." El Hejaz was Mohammed's native country.

It is no better if we study the Koran use of the word *tahir.* That, too, has only reference to outward purity of the body. As, for example, in the Koran text which states "None shall touch it but the purified." This is generally applied to circumcision or to lustrations as incumbent on all who handle the "holy-book" of Mohammed.

One who was for many years an English missionary in Egypt writes: "Some years ago I was anxious to see what the Koran teaches with regard to the necessity of man's being holy inwardly. I closely examined all the verses having any reference to this subject and did not find a single passage pointing

[1]The Arabic expression is "*Al balîgh fi'l nazāhet ámma yŭjib naksānahŭ,*" which means anything or nothing! Again a definition by negation.

out the necessity of man's being holy or becoming sanctified in his heart, mind or thoughts. I remember finding *one* passage which seemed likely to point somewhat more to inward purity, but when I read the commentary showing under what circumstances the verse was revealed, I found a long story explaining that Mohammed having addressed a series of questions to certain people in order to find out whether they were true believers ultimately declared them to be *mutahiroon,* "purified" (sanctified?) because he had ascertained that they performed their purifications in the proper manner, with three clean stones! It is a hopeless case to look for the doctrine of the holiness of God and the necessity of purity of heart in the Koran." The whole idea of moral purity and utter separation from sin is unknown to the Koran vocabulary.

One further thought we get by study of the Moslem idea of God's attributes; it is the key to what Palgrave calls "the Pantheism of Force."

The seventy-second, seventy-third, seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth names on the list of attributes are called "mothers of the attributes," *i.e.,* they are the fundamental ideas in the conception of God. *"Essence* and *Substance,* the *First* and the *Last."* This is to Moslems—

> "The verse which all the names of Allah holdeth
> As in one sky the silver stars all sit."

Whether Mohammed himself intended to teach the

ideas of pantheism or had any idea of the import of these terms does not alter the fact that they spell pantheism to many of his followers. If pantheism is the doctrine of one substance, it is taught here. God is the inside and the outside of everything. He is the phenomena (*Dhahir*) and the power behind the phenomena (*Bātin*). It is this verse that is the delight of the Sufîs and the mystics. On this revelation of God they built their philosophy after the Vedanta school of the Hindus. How far this teaching was carried is best seen in the celebrated *Masnavi* of Jalal-u-din-ar-Rumi, translated into English by E. H. Whinfield.[1] He puts these words as emanating from Deity:—

"I am the Gospel, the Psalter, the Koran;
I am Uzza and Lat—Bel and the Dragon.
Into three and seventy sects is the world divided,
Yet only One God; the faithful who believed in Him am I.
Lies and truth, good, bad, hard and soft
Knowledge, solitude, virtue, faith,
The deepest ground of hell, the highest torment of the flames,
The highest paradise,
The earth and what is therein,
The angels and the devils, Spirit and man, Am I.
What is the goal of speech, O tell it, Shems Tabrîzi?
The goal of sense? This—The World Soul Am I."

Not only are there thousands of Moslems who are

[1] *Masnavi-i-Mánavi*, the Spiritual Couplets of Jalalu-din Moh. Rumi, translated by E. H. Whinfield, M.A., London, 1898, Trübner & Co.

pantheists of the Sufi-school, but there is not a Moslem sect which does not go to extremes in its erroneous conception and misconstruction of the doctrine of God. The Wahabîs are accused, and not without reason, of being gross anthropomorphists. As a revolt from the rationalism of the Mutazilite school many, in the days of the Abbasids, held anthropomorphic views of Deity and materialistic ideas in regard to the soul. "The soul, for example, was conceived of by them as corporeal or as an accident of the body and the Divine Essence was imagined as a human body. The religious teaching and art of the Moslems were greatly averse to the symbolical God-Father of the Christians, but there was an abundance of absurd speculations about the form of Allah. Some went so far as to ascribe to Him all the bodily members together, with the exception of the beard and other privileges of Oriental manhood."[1]

The *Salabiyah* hold that "God is indifferent to the actions of men, just as though He were in a state of sleep." The *Muztariyah* hold that good and evil are both directly from God and that man is entirely irresponsible. The *Nazamiah* hold that it is lawful to speak of the Almighty as "The Thing."

Some schools hold that the attributes are eternal and others deny it to save their idea of pure and absolute monism in Deity. For, they argue, if any of

[1] *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, by Dr. T. J. de Boer, London, 1903, p. 44.

the attributes are eternal, or all of them, there is more than one Eternal; and two Eternals is infidelity!

One sect, the *Mutarabisiyah,* chose an impossible, although golden, mean by teaching that Allah with all His attributes, save three, is eternal; but His power, knowledge and purpose were created. What Allah could have been before He had power, knowledge or purpose they do not say.

In only one passage of the Koran, Allah is described as seemingly *dependent* on or indebted to something outside of Himself; the verse represents Allah as the Light of the World, but the commentaries cast no light on its peculiar and evidently mystical teaching; "God is the light of the heavens and the earth; His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, and the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as though it were a glittering star; *it is lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east nor of the west, the oil of which would well-nigh give light though no fire touched it. Light upon Light.*" (Surah 24:35.)

Is this one of the many distorted reflections of ideas which Mohammed borrowed from the Jews and does he refer to the Golden Candlestick?

V

THE RELATION OF ALLAH TO HIS WORLD

"We may well believe that heathen religions so far from having arisen, as some have vainly imagined, out of the soil of lofty aspiration after a God unknown, are devices more or less elaborate for shutting out the thought of God as He is from the minds and hearts of men. The Gospel meets its greatest triumphs not among those who have the most finished, but among those who have the crudest systems of religion. Elaborateness, completeness, finish, here seem to be elaborateness, completeness, finish of escape from the consciousness of God."—*Rev. E. N. Harris* (of Burma).

"Whoever desires an introduction to Allah—Islam's absentee landlord, who, jealous of man, wound the clock of the universe and went away forever — is referred to Palgrave." — *Frederick Perry Noble.*

MOHAMMED'S doctrine of the Unity of God is at the same time his doctrine of Providence and his philosophy of life. The existence and character of God, not only, but His relation past, present, and future to the universe are latent in the words *La ilaha illa Allah,* There is no god but God.

It was not a theologian nor a philosopher who first called attention to this fundamental idea in Islam as the key to a proper understanding of the Moslem mind, but the Arabian traveller, William Gifford Palgrave, who knew Islam not from books as much as from long and close contact with the Arabs themselves. Whatever may be the opinion concerning Palgrave's accuracy as a geographer, there is no doubt that he was a capital observer of the *people,* their manners and religion. It is, therefore, without apology for the length of the quotation that we give here Palgrave's famous characterization of Allah.[1]

"There is no god but God—are words simply tantamount in English to the negation of any deity save one alone; and thus much they certainly mean in Arabic, but they imply much more also. Their full sense is not only to deny absolutely and unreservedly all plurality whether of nature or of person in the Supreme Being, not only to establish the unity of the Unbegetting and the Unbegot, in all its simple and uncommunicable Oneness, but besides this the words in Arabic and among Arabs imply that this one Supreme Being is also the only Agent, the only Force, the only Act existing throughout the universe and leaves us to all beings else, matter or spirit, instinct or intelligence, physical or moral, nothing but pure unconditional passiveness, alike in movement

[1] *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia,* 1862-63, by W. S. Palgrave, Vol. I., pp. 365-367.

or in quiescence, in action or in capacity. The sole power, the sole motor, movement, energy and deed is God; the rest is downright inertia and mere instrumentality, from the highest archangel down to the simplest atom of creation. Hence in this one sentence, 'La ilaha illa Allah,' is summed up a system which, for want of a better name, I may be permitted to call the Pantheism of Force, or of Act, thus exclusively assigned to God, who absorbs it all, exercises it all, and to Whom alone it can be ascribed, whether for preserving or for destroying, for relative evil or for equally relative good. I say *relative* because it is clear that in such a theology no place is left for absolute good or evil, reason or extravagance; all is abridged in the autocratical will of the one great Agent: 'sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas;' or more significantly still, in Arabic, *'Kama yesha,'* 'as He wills it,' to quote the constantly recurring expression of the Koran.

"Thus immeasurably and eternally exalted above, and dissimilar from, all creatures which lie levelled before Him on one common plane of instrumentality and inertness, God is One in the totality of omnipotent and omnipresent action, which acknowledges no rule, standard or limit, save His own sole and absolute will. He communicates nothing to His creatures; for their seeming power and act ever remain His alone, and in return He receives nothing from them; for whatever they may be, that they are

in Him, by Him and from Him only.[1] And secondly, no superiority, no distinction, no preëminence can be lawfully claimed by one creature over another in the utter equalization of their unexceptional servitude and abasement; all are alike tools of the one solitary Force, which employs them to crush or to benefit, to truth or to error, to honor or shame, to happiness or misery, quite independently of their individual fitness, deserts or advantage and simply because He will it and as He wills it.

"One might at first sight think that this tremendous Autocrat, this uncontrolled and unsympathizing Power would be far above anything like passions, desires or inclinations. Yet such is not the case, for He has with respect to His creatures one main feeling and source of action, namely, jealousy of them, lest they should perchance attribute to themselves something of what is His alone, and thus encroach on His all-engrossing kingdom. Hence He is ever more ready to punish than to reward, to inflict pain than to bestow pleasure, to ruin than to build. It is His singular satisfaction to make created beings continually feel that they are nothing else than His

[1]Note the distinction between this and the New Testament phrase: "*Of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things.*" The fact that a Moslem never thanks the giver, but only God, for alms or kindness is a capital illustration of what Palgrave asserts. There is much thanksgiving to God, but no *gratitude to man,* in Moslem lands.

slaves, His tools, and contemptible tools also, that thus they may the better acknowledge His superiority, and know His power to be above their power, His cunning above their cunning, His will above their will, His pride above their pride; or rather, that there is no power, cunning, will or pride save His own. But He Himself, sterile in His inaccessible height, neither loving nor enjoying aught save His own and self-measured decree, without son, companion or counsellor, is no less barren for Himself than for His creatures; and His own barrenness and lone egoism in Himself is the cause and rule of His indifferent and unregarding despotism around. *The first note is the key of the whole tune, and the primal idea of God runs through and modifies the whole system and creed that centres in Him.*

"That the notion here given of the Deity, monstrous and blasphemous as it may appear, is exactly and literally that which the Koran conveys or intends to convey, I at present take for granted. But that it indeed is so, no one who has attentively perused and thought over the Arabic text (for mere cursory reading, especially in a translation, will not suffice) can hesitate to allow. In fact, every phrase of the preceding sentences, every touch in this odious portrait has been taken to the best of my ability, word for word, or at least meaning for meaning, from 'the Book,' the truest mirror of the mind and scope of its writer. And that such was in reality Mahomet's

mind and idea is fully confirmed by the witness-tongue of contemporary tradition. Of this we have many authentic samples: the Saheeh, the commentaries of Beidhawi, the Mishkat-el-Misabih and fifty similar works afford ample testimony on this point."

The only criticism which the student of Islam can offer on this masterpiece of word-painting on the Moslem idea of God is that it applies more particularly to the Wahabi sect than to other sects of Islam. But this criticism only adds force to Palgrave's argument, for the Wahabi revival was nothing else than an attempt to return to primitive Islam and to go back to Mohammed's own teaching. After living in Arabia for over thirteen years, I have no hesitation in saying that, to my mind, the Wahabi sect is more orthodox (*i.e.,* closer to the Koran and earliest tradition) than any other sect of Islam both in their creed and their practice.[1] What Palgrave states regarding Allah's relation to His creatures can be best proved and illustrated by treating first the Moslem doctrine of Creation and then that of Providence. We will find in this study that orthodox Islam is at once deistic and pantheistic. Theologians and philosophers have pantheistic views of Allah, making Him the sole force in the universe; but the popular thought of Him (owing to the iron-weight of the doctrine of fatalism) is deistic. God stands aloof from

[1]See a paper on the Wahabis in the *Journal of the Victoria Institute,* Vol. XXXIII., pp. 311-333. London, 1901.

creation; only His power is felt; men are like the pieces on a chess-board and He is the only player.

Creation itself was not intended so much for the manifestation of God's glory or the outburst of His love, as for a sample of His power. The following are the Koran texts that speak of creation (Surah 50:37): "Of old we created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in *six* days, and no weariness touched us." (Surah 41:8.) "Do ye indeed disbelieve in Him who in *two* days created the earth? Do ye assign Him equals? The Lord of the world is He. And He hath placed on the earth the firm mountains which tower above it, and He hath blessed it and distributed its nourishments throughout it (for the cravings of all alike) in *four* days. Then He applied Himself [went] to the heaven which was but smoke; and to it and to the earth He said, 'Come ye in obedience or against your will?' And they both said, 'We come obedient.' And He completed them as seven heavens in *two* days and in each heaven made known its office; and He furnished the lower heavens with lights and guardian angels. This is the disposition of the Almighty, the all-knowing One." Again in Surah 16:3: "He created the heavens and the earth to set forth His truth. High let Him be exalted above the gods they join with Him. Man hath He created out of a moist germ, etc." Surah 13:2: "It is God who hath reared the heavens without pillars, thou canst behold; then

seated Himself upon His throne and ('compelled to service') imposed laws on the sun and moon; each travelleth to its appointed goal. He ordereth all things." Surah 35:12: "God created you out of dust, then of the germs of life, then made you two sexes."

The first thing that strikes one is the evident contradiction in these texts regarding the number of the days of creation. (Cf. Surahs 50:37 and 41:8.) But such disagreement of statement is common in the Koran. Beidhawi's commentary tries hard to reconcile the discrepancy, but finally gives it up. On Surah 41st he remarks: "Allah did not command the heavens and the earth to come in order to prove their obedience, but only to manifest His power." He explains the *two* days of creation thus: "He created the heavens on Thursday and the sun, moon and stars on Friday." According to the table-talk of the prophet (Mishkat-el-Misabih 24:1, part 3) God created the earth on Saturday, the hills on Sunday, the trees on Monday, *all unpleasant things on Tuesday,* the light on Wednesday, the beasts on Thursday, and Adam, who was the last creation, was created after the time of afternoon prayers on Friday.

In this orthodox tradition, Mohammed's idea that Allah is the author of evil crops out. This idea occurs also in Surah 113:2: "I seek refuge in the Lord of the daybreak from the evil he did make." Zamakh-

shari comments thus: "The evil of His creation and of His creatures, both those who are responsible and those who are not responsible," etc. The common Moslem idea, undoubtedly taken from the Koran and Tradition, is that Allah created hell and created Satan such as they are. He is the creator of *evil Jinn* as well as of the *good Jinn;* and He made them evil in the same sense as He made the scorpion poisonous and arsenic deadly. Why did Allah create hell? To fill it with infidels. In describing creation Moslem theologians take pains to establish the fact that the universe is not infinite; God alone is that and to believe *two* infinites possible, is *shirk,* polytheism. A Persian Mullah, in recent years, offered to give an English traveller logical proof of the fact as follows: "Let us suppose that the Universe is infinite. Then from the centre of the earth draw two straight lines diverging at an angle of 60° and produce them to infinity. Join the terminal points by another straight line to form the base of a triangle. Since one of the angles is 60° and the two sides are equal, the remaining angles are 60° each and the triangle is equilateral. Therefore, since the sides are infinite, the base is also of infinite length. But the base is a straight line joining two points (*viz.*, the terminal points of the sides), that is to say, it is limited in both directions. Therefore, it is not infinite, neither are the sides infinite, and a straight line cannot be drawn to infinity. Therefore, the Universe is

finite."[1] Such argument needs no comment; but it is a sample of Mohammedan logic.

El Buchari gives the following tradition of the prophet regarding the order of creation:[2] "The first thing which God created was a pen, and He said to it, Write. It said, What shall I write? And God said, Write down the quantity of every individual thing to be created. And it wrote all that was and that will be to eternity." In Surah 13:2, *seq.* (quoted above), there occurs an expression which has given rise to much discussion among Moslems: "It is God who hath reared the heavens without pillars, then *seated* Himself upon His throne." The word used for *seated* (*istawa*)[3] has given rise to endless disputations. Even the last Mohammedan reform, under Mohammed bin Abd-ul-Wahāb, made this word the shibboleth of their theology. Most commentaries interpret the word deistically, "Then He *made for* the throne," i.e., left the world entirely and absolutely. Zamakhshari escapes the dilemma by silence and Beidhawi says, "He betook Himself to the throne, *i.e.,* to preserve and to direct." Husaini, the commentator, remarks on Surah 9:131: "The throne of God has 8,000 pillars and the distance be-

[1]E. G. Browne's *A Year among the Persians*, p. 144.

[2]Hughes' *Dict. of Islam*, p. 472.

[3]From the root *sawa*, to intend, to be equal; VIII. conjugation *istawa*, to be equal, to ascend, intend, to sit firm and square upon. See Penrice's *Dictionary of the Koran.*

tween each pillar is 3,000,000 miles." Others make the throne more spiritual, but all are agreed that Allah is now on the throne and that He rules the world by means of angels and jinn and men, all subject to His will and decrees. One Moslem author settled the matter of Allah's sitting in the famous dogmatic phrase, often quoted, "That He sits is certain; how He sits only He knows; and why He sits it is infidelity to ask."

Why He sits it is infidelity to ask—that is the orthodox Moslem reply to the questions that arise in the human heart concerning the Divine government of the world and the problem of evil. When the Mu'tazilite sect (the only school of Moslem thought that ever dared to give human reason a place of authority) in Bagdad attempted to answer questions they were gagged by the orthodox party. Renan says:

"Science and philosophy flourished on Musalman soil during the first half of the middle ages; but it was not by reason of Islam, it was in spite of Islam. Not a Musalman philosopher or scholar escaped persecution. During the period just specified persecution is less powerful than the instinct of free enquiry, and the rationalistic tradition is kept alive; then intolerance and fanaticism win the day. It is true that the Christian Church also cast great difficulties in the way of science in the middle ages; but she did not strangle it outright, as did the Musalman theology. To give Islam the credit of Averroes and of so many other illustrious thinkers, who passed half their life in prison, in forced hiding, in disgrace, whose books were burned and whose writings almost suppressed by

theological authority, is as if one were to ascribe to the Inquisition the discoveries of Galileo, and a whole scientific development which it was not able to prevent."[1]

The relation of Allah to the world is such that all free-will not only but all freedom in the exercise of the intellect is preposterous. God is so great and the character of His greatness is so pantheistically absolute that there is no room for the human. All good and all evil come directly from Allah. In twenty passages of the Koran, Allah is said "to lead men astray." (See Sir William Muir's *Selections from the Coran,* p. 52.) Still worse, God is said to have created a multitude of spirits and of men expressly for torture in such a hell as only the Koran and Tradition can paint. (Surahs 16:180 and 32:13.) "The word must be fulfilled. Verily, I will most surely fill up hell with jinns and men together." Even for the true believer there is no sure hope. One celebrated verse in the Koran (Surah Miriam, vs. 72) says that every one of the *believers* must enter hell, too! Hope perishes under the weight of this iron-bondage and pessimism becomes the popular philosophy. Islam saw only one side of a many-sided truth. As Clarke puts it, "Islam saw God, but not man; saw the claims of Deity, but not the rights of humanity; saw authority, but failed to see freedom—therefore, hardened into despotism, stiffened into

[1]In Report of Asiatic Society of Paris.

formalism, and sank into death."[1] Elsewhere the same author calls Mohammedanism "the worst form of monotheism in that it makes of God pure will—will divorced from reason and love." Islam, instead of being a progressive and completed idea, goes to a lower level than the religions it claims to supplant. "Mohammed teaches a God above us; Moses teaches a God above us and yet *with us;* Jesus Christ teaches God above us, God with us and God in us." God above us, not as an Oriental despot, but as a Heavenly Father. God with us, Emmanuel, in the mystery of His Incarnation, which is the stumbling block to the Moslem. God in us through His Spirit renewing the heart and controlling the will into a true *Islam,* or obedient subjection by a living faith.

[1]James Freeman Clarke's *Ten Great Religions,* Vol. II., p. 68. Although he is a Unitarian, he has no praise for Mohammedan monotheism.

VI

MOHAMMEDAN IDEAS OF THE TRINITY

"They say the Merciful has taken to Himself a son—ye have brought a monstrous thing! The heavens well-nigh burst asunder thereat, and the earth is riven and the mountains fall down broken, that they attribute to the Merciful a son! But it becomes not the Merciful to take to Himself a son."—*Surah Miriam, vs. 91-93.*

"Praise belongs to God who has not taken to Himself a son and has not had a partner in His kingdom, nor had a patron against such abasement."—*The Night Journey, vs. 112.*

THE Moslem idea of God consists not only in what is asserted of Deity, but also, and more emphatically, in what is denied. James Freeman Clarke, in his study of the Ten Great Religions, calls attention to this fact in regard to all false faiths in these pregnant words: "Of all the systems of belief which have had a widespread hold on mankind this may be posited, that they are commonly true in what they affirm, false in what they deny. The error in every theory is usually found in its denials, that is,

its limitations. What it sees is substantial and real; what it does not see is a mark only of its limited vision."[1]

The Mohammedan controversy with Christians has ever had two great centres; and although the form of the ellipse has changed since the days of Raymund Lull, or even since the time of Henry Martyn, the foci remain the same. The integrity of Scripture and the reasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity are the two points in Christianity against which Islam emphatically testifies. At the same time these two ideas are fundamental in the Christian system. The doctrine of the Trinity is not only fundamental but essential to the very existence of Christianity. Dr. Baur of the Tübingen school acknowledges this when he says that "in the battle between Arius and Athanasius the existence of Christianity was at stake." In some form the doctrine of the Trinity has always been confessed by the Church and all who opposed it were thrown off from its fellowship. "When this doctrine was abandoned, other articles of faith, such as the atonement, regeneration, etc., have almost always followed, by logical necessity, as when one draws the wire from a necklace of gems, the gems all fall asunder." (Henry B. Smith.) The doctrine of the Trinity, in its widest sense, includes that of the Incarnation and of the Holy Spirit. In studying what the Koran teaches on this subject,

[1] *Ten Great Religions*, Vol. II., p. 62.

therefore, we must examine not only what it tells of the Trinity, but also those passages that speak of the nature of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

The following order will be observed in our study: (*a*) the Koran passages that speak directly of the Trinity; (*b*) those that refer to the subject indirectly; (*c*) the Christology of the Koran as it bears on this doctrine; (*d*) the passages that speak of the Holy Spirit.

(*a*) The direct references to the Trinity are not many in the Koran and all occur in *two* Surahs, composed by Mohammed toward the close of his career at Medina. Surah 4:167-170 reads: "O ye people of the Book do not exceed in your religion nor say against God aught save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, is but the apostle of God and His Word which He cast into Mary and a spirit from Him; believe, then, in God and His apostles, and say not, Three. Have done! It were better for you. God is only one God, celebrated be His praise from that He should beget a son!" Again Surah 5:77: "They misbelieve who say, Verily, God is the third of three; for there is no God but one, and if they do not desist from what they say there shall touch those who misbelieve among them grievous woe. Will they not turn again towards God and ask pardon of Him? for God is forgiving and merciful." The third passage, and that most often used as a proof-text by

Moslems against Christians, is in the same Surah (5:116): "And when God said, O Jesus, son of Mary! Is it thou who didst say to men, take me and my mother for two gods beside God? He said, I celebrate Thy praise, what ails me that I should say what I have no right to? If I had said it Thou wouldst have known it; Thou knowest what is in my soul, but I know not what is in Thy soul; verily, Thou art one who knoweth the unseen."

These passages leave no doubt that Mohammed denied the doctrine of the Trinity and that he conceived it to be, *or affirmed it to be,* a species of tritheism, consisting of God, Mary and Jesus Christ. [Whether Mohammed had a correct idea of the Trinity and deliberately put forth this travesty of the Christian idea, we will consider later.] The commentaries interpret the Koran as follows: Zamakhshari on 4:169 remarks, "The story received among Christians is that God is one in essence and three persons, (*akanîm*) the person of the Father, the person of the Son and the person of the Holy Spirit. And they verily mean by the person of the Father, the Being, and by the person of the Son, knowledge, and by the person of the Holy Spirit, life. And this supposes that God is the third of three, or, if not, that there are three gods. And that which the Koran here refers to is the clear statement of theirs, that God and Christ and Mary are three gods and that the Christ

is a child (*walad*) of God from Mary." For proof he then quotes Surah 5:116, and adds: "And it is universally known concerning Christians that they hold the deity and humanity of Christ as regards his father and mother." From this it is evident that Zamakhshari had a more correct idea of the doctrine of the Trinity than did Mohammed and that after offering a modal trinity as the creed of Christians he covers up the Koran mistake by asserting, without proof, that the trinity was a triad of Father, Son and Mother. (Vol. I. of the *Kishaf,* p. 241.) Beidhawi (on 4:169) remarks: "Jesus is called the Spirit of God because He makes the dead to live or quickens hearts." On the following verse he is doubtful; "Either God is the third of three gods or is a triad of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (Vol. I., p. 319.) He, too, avoids a real explanation of the gross misstatement in the Koran that Mary is one of the persons of the Trinity. The *Jilalain* (Vol. I., p. 278) prove that Jesus cannot be God, "because He has a spirit and everything possessed of a spirit is compounded (*murakkib*), and God is absolutely without compounding, arrangement (*tarkîb*), *i.e.,* simple." He says the Trinity consists of "Allah and Jesus and His mother."

It is interesting to note here that the earliest of these three exegetes is most correct in his ideas and the latest one entirely ignores the apparently well-known facts as given by Zamakhshari and admitted

by Beidhawi. The dates of their commentaries were: Zamakhshari, 604 A.H.; Beidhawi, 685 A.H., and Jilalain, 864-911 A.H. On the other passages of the Koran quoted above these commentaries offer no new explanations or ideas.

(*b*) Let us turn to other Koran texts that have a bearing on this false trinity, or the tritheism of which Christians are accused. By *shirk* the Koran and Moslems mean ascribing companions or plurality to Deity; and according to the Wahabi writers, it is of four kinds: 1. *Shirk-ul-Ilm* is to ascribe knowledge to others than God. Jesus knows no secret thing and does not share in what God knows. 2. *Shirk-ut-Tassarŭf* is to ascribe power-to-act-independently, to any one else than to God. All are His slaves. No one can intercede except by God's permission.[1] To say that Christ intercedes by His own power or merit is *shirk,* polytheism. 3. *Shirk-ul-Abāda* is to ascribe a partner to God who can be worshipped, or worshipping the created instead of the Creator, as Christians are said to do when they worship Christ or adore Mary. 4. *Shirk-ul-'Adat* is to perform ceremonies or follow superstitions which indicate reliance or trust on anything or any one save God. There is no doubt that this fourfold classification by the Wahabi sect has its ground in the Koran, and it is on these four items that Christians are called *mushrikŭn,* or polytheists, by Moslems to-day, although that word is

[1]Surahs 2:256; 19:90; 20:108; 34:22; 39:45; 78:38.

specially used for the Meccan idolaters in the Koran.[1] Logically the use of this term for Christians is perfectly natural and correct from a Moslem point of view, for we certainly hold that the Son of God is omniscient, independent of the creature, has power as an intercessor and is worthy of worship. Practically, therefore, all the passages in the Koran that speak against idolatry and assert God's unity are used by Moslems as testimony against the doctrine of the Trinity. These texts have already been considered in Chapter II. and are too numerous to mention.

(*c*) The Christology of the Koran includes the apocryphal account of Jesus' birth and life among men, His translation into heaven and the ideas regarding His second advent; but what more especially concerns us is to know what Islam teaches regarding the *person* of Christ. For a full and generally fair treatment of this subject the reader is referred to Gerock's Christologie des Koran;[2] much of what the Koran teaches concerning Christ is not germane to our topic, although of curious interest.

Regarding the birth of Jesus Christ, the Koran

[1]Al Bagawi says (on 98:1) that the term *Ahl-ul-Kitab*, people of the book, is always used for the Jews and Christians and *Mushrikŭn* for those who worship idols. Cf. Hughes' *Dict. of Islam*, pp. 579, 580.

[2]*Versuch einer Darstellung der Christologie des Koran*, von C. F. Gerock, Professor der Geschichte am Gymnasium zu Buchsweiler im Elfasz. Hamburg, 1839.

and Tradition agree that it was miraculous, but they equally deny an incarnation of Deity in the Christian sense. Surah 3:37-43: "And when the angels said, O Mary, verily God has chosen thee and has purified thee and has chosen thee above the women of the world. O Mary! be devout unto thy Lord and adore and bow down with those who bow. . . . O Mary, verily God gives thee the glad tidings of a Word from Him his name shall be Messiah Jesus, the son of Mary, regarded in this world and the next, and of those whose place is nigh to God. And He shall speak to people in his cradle and when grown up, and shall be among the righteous. She said, Lord, how can I have a son when man has not yet touched me? He said, Thus God creates what He pleaseth. When He decrees a matter He only says, Be and it is. . . ." Surah 19:16-21: "And mention in the book, Mary; when she retired from her family into an eastern place; and she took a veil to screen herself from them; and we sent unto her our spirit, and he took for her the semblance of a well-made man. Said she, Verily, I take refuge in the Merciful One from thee, if thou art pious. Said he, I am only a messenger of thy Lord to bestow on thee a pure boy." . . . Zamakhshari comments on this verse in the usual coarse, materialistic way by saying that the virgin conceived "when the angel Gabriel blew up her garment." (Vol. II., p. 4.) It is impossible to translate the gross and utterly sensual

ideas of Moslem commentators on the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ. The above verses from the Koran, however, will indicate to the thoughtful reader how far off even Mohammed was from a *spiritual* conception of God's power as creator, though he believed Christ to be merely human. The Moslem mind to-day is too carnal to understand what the Christian Church means by its doctrine of the Incarnation. Husain, the commentator, *e.g.,* says: "When she went eastward, *i.e.,* out of her house in an eastward direction to perform her ablutions, Gabriel appeared to her." And Zamakhshari suggests that this accounts for the eastward position in prayer on the part of Christians!

The Koran denies the Divinity and the eternal Sonship of Christ. He is a creature like Adam. God could destroy Jesus and His mother without loss to Himself. Surah 19:35, 36: "God could not take to Himself any son. . . . When He decrees a matter He only says to it 'Be,' and it is." Surah 3:51: "Verily, the likeness of Jesus with God is as the likeness of Adam. He created him from the earth, then He said to him Be, and he was." Surah 9:30: "The Jews say Ezra is the son of God;[1] and the Christians say that the Messiah is the son of God; that is what they say with their mouths imi-

[1]There is no Jewish tradition whatever in support of this accusation of Mohammed and it was probably a malicious invention. Cf. Palmer's note and the Commentaries.

tating the sayings of those who misbelieved before. God fight them! How they lie." Surah 5:19: "Infidels are they who say, Verily, God is the Messiah, the son of Mary. Say, who has any hold on God if He wished to destroy the Messiah, the son of Mary, and his mother and those who are on the earth together?"

Although the Koran and Tradition give Jesus Christ a high place among the prophets, and affirm His sinlessness[1] and power to work miracles,[2] *all this does not distinguish His person in any way as to its nature from other prophets who came before Him.* The pre-existence of the Word of God is denied. While Tradition is full of stories about the *Nŭr-Mohammed* or "Light of Mohammed which was created before all things made by God." Specially is it to be noted that the Koran denies the atonement and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. (Surahs 3:47-50; 4:155, 156.) Wakidi relates that Mohammed had such repugnance to the sign of the cross that he destroyed everything brought to his house with that figure upon it. Even in Moslem Tradition regarding the second coming of Jesus this hatred of the cross comes out. Abu Huraira relates that the prophet

[1]See *Mishkat-ul-Misabih,* Book XXIII., ch. xii. In the same book the sinlessness of Mary, as well as of Jesus, is asserted (Bk. I., ch. iii., pt. 1). Hughes' *Dict. of Islam,* p. 205.

[2]Surahs 3 : 43-46; 5 : 112-115. Cf. Beidhawi's *Commentary* on the latter passage.

said: "I swear by God it is near when Jesus, son of Mary, will descend from heaven upon your people a just king, and he will break the crucifix and will kill the swine and will remove the poll-tax from the unenfranchised." (Mishkat 23:6.) The hatred toward the sign of the cross as emblem of the atonement is widespread among Moslems; Doughty, the Arabian traveller, tells how in the heart of Nejd, away from all Christian influences or offences, the children draw a cross on the desert sand and defile it to show that they are true Moslems.[1] On the other hand, the sign of the cross is used in amulets and on property because of its sinister power; the frontispiece gives an illustration of such use. All Moslems are agreed that Jesus is now alive and in heaven, but they disagree as to the degree of his exaltation. According to Tradition, Mohammed said that "he saw Jesus and John in the second heaven on the night of his *Mi'raj,* or celestial journey."[2] In the commentary known as *Jamia'-l-Bayyan* it is said that Christ is in the third region of bliss; while some say He is in the fourth heaven.[3] In the tradition of this *Mi'raj,* Mohammed ascends to the seventh heaven, where he finds Abraham; Moses is in the sixth. These statements indicate that Christ occupies no *supreme* place in heaven according to the

[1] *Arabia Deserta,* Vol. I., p. 156.
[2] *Mishkat-ul-Misabih,* Book XXIV., ch. vii.
[3] *Dict. of Islam,* articles on the Mi'raj and on Jesus Christ.

Prophet. In considering the character and content of Moslem monotheism, a Christian can never forget that Jesus Christ has no place in the Moslem idea of God, and that the portrait of our Saviour as given in the Koran and in Tradition is a sad caricature.

(*d*) The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is mentioned by that name three times in the Koran. Surah 16:104 speaks of Him as the inspiring agent of the Koran: "Say the Holy Spirit brought it down from thy Lord in truth;" and twice in the 2d Surah, vs. 81 and 254, we read: "We strengthened him (*i.e.,* Jesus) with the Holy Spirit." *But all Moslem commentators are agreed that the Holy Spirit in these passages means the angel Gabriel.* Why Mohammed confounded Gabriel with the Holy Spirit is far from clear. The only distinct assertion that Gabriel was the channel of Mohammed's revelation occurs in a Medina Surah (2:91), and Gabriel is mentioned only once besides (66:4). Was this a misapprehension or a misrepresentation on the part of the Koran and the commentators? We have already seen that the commentators at least were not in ignorance of the fact that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity among Christians. Was Mohammed ignorant of the true doctrine of the Trinity as held by Christians? The common idea is that he was; and this idea finds its support in the old story of the Collyridian sect in

Arabia.[1] The assertion is that Mohammed got his idea of the Trinity from this heretical sect, "who invested the Virgin Mary with the name and honours of a goddess," and offered to her cylindrical cakes (κολλύριδες), hence their name. Let us see what basis there is for this view. The only authority we have to prove even the *existence* of this female sect is the history of heresies by Epiphanius;[2] what others tell is quoted from his chapter. Gerock says: "Epiphanius does not relate anything definite concerning the sect, and the long chapter devoted to this heresy contains next to nothing save controversy, in which the author seems to delight. Even had such a sect existed at the time of Epiphanius in Arabia, it is far from probable that, consisting only of women, it would have continued for three centuries until the time of Mohammed and become so extended and strong that Mohammed could mistake it for the Christian religion."[3] Mohammed came in contact

[1]Gibbon, Vol. III., p. 488. Hottinger, *Hist. Orient*, p. 225, and copied in most of the later accounts of the history of Moslem teaching, *e.g.*, Sale's *Prelim. Discourse to the Koran*.

[2]"Epiphanius," says Dr. Schaff (*Hist. of Christian Church*, Vol. III., p. 169), "was lacking in knowledge of the world and of men, in sound judgment and critical discernment. He was possessed of boundless credulity, now almost proverbial, causing innumerable errors and contradictions in his writings." Scaliger calls him "an ignorant man who committed the greatest blunders, told the greatest falsehoods, and knew next to nothing about either Hebrew or Greek."

[3]Gerock's *Christologie*, p. 75.

with Oriental Christianity from *three* quarters: the Christians of Yemen visited Mecca, and Abraha was turned back in defeat with his army, in the year in which Mohammed was born; Mohammed had as concubine a Christian Coptic woman, Miriam, the mother of his son Ibrahim; Mohammed went once and again to Syria with Khadijah's caravan of merchandise. Early Christianity in Arabia was much more extended and influential than is generally supposed.[1] Nearly all of Yeman and Nejran was permeated with the doctrines of Christianity and there had been many martyrs. Concerning the view held by all Yemen Christians regarding the Trinity, we have unimpeachable evidence in the monuments found by Glaser. (See remark in Chapter II.) The Abyssinian Church of the fifth century was undoubtedly corrupt and paid high honors to the Virgin Mary and the saints; but it is certain also that this Church always held, as it does now, that the three persons of the Trinity are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The same is true as regards the Nestorians, the Jacobites, the Armenians and the Maronites; because the Monophysite controversy concerned itself not with the doctrine of the Trinity, but with the Person of Christ.[2] Both Nestorians and Monophysites accepted the Nicene Creed without the *Filioque*. Now how is it possible to imagine

[1]Wright's *Early Christianity in Arabia*, London, 1855; and *Arabia, the Cradle of Islam*, pp. 300-314.

[2]See Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. I., pp. 79-82.

that Mohammed, who knew of Arabian Christianity, visited Syria and married a Coptic woman, who became his special favorite, and whose earliest converts took refuge in Abyssinia—how is it possible to imagine that he was ignorant of the persons of the Trinity?

In addition to the reasons given above we read in Ibn Hisham (quoted from Ibn Ishak) that the Christians of Nejran sent a large and learned deputation to Mohammed headed by a Bishop of the Emperor's faith, *i.e.,* of the orthodox Catholic Church. Now is it possible that a Bishop could have represented the Holy Trinity to consist of God, Christ and Mary (as Tradition says he did) after the whole Eastern world had been resounding for ages with the profound and sharply defined controversies concerning this fundamental doctrine?

In concluding our investigation of this subject, can we resist the conclusion of Koelle as given in his critical and classical book on Mohammed and Mohammedanism?[1] *"Not want of opportunity, but want of sympathy and compatibility kept him aloof from the religion of Christ. His first wife introduced him to her Christian cousin; one of his later wives had embraced Christianity in Abyssinia; and the most favored of his concubines was a Christian damsel from the Copts of Egypt. He was acquainted with ascetic monks and had dealings with learned*

[1]Koelle's *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 471. This is the best recent book on Islam and the life of Mohammed.

Bishops of the Orthodox Church. In those days the reading of the Holy Scriptures in the public services of the Catholic Church was already authoritatively enjoined and universally practised; if he had wished thoroughly to acquaint himself with them he could easily have done so. But having no adequate conception of the nature of sin and man's fallen state, he also lacked the faculty of truly appreciating the remedy for it which was offered in the Gospel." And if Koelle is correct, as I believe he is, then Mohammed's idea of God includes a deliberate rejection of the Christian idea of the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.[1]

[1]The question whether Mohammed could read and write is important in this connection. On this point Moslems themselves are not agreed. Some Shiahs affirm he could, while the Sunnis deny it. Western scholars are also divided in their opinion on this question. The following hold that Mohammed could read and write and give good reasons for their opinion: M. Turpin in *Hist. de la Vie de Mahomet*, Vol. I., pp. 285-88; Wahl, *Intro. to the Koran*, p. 78; Sprenger, *Life of Moh.*, Vol. II., pp. 398-402; Weil, *Intro. to the Koran*, p. 39; H. Hirschfeld, *Jüdische Elemente im Koran*, p. 22. Others deny it, among them: Marraci, p. 535; Prideaux, p. 43; Ockley, *Hist. of the Saracens*, p. 11; Gerock's *Christologie d. Koran*, p. 9; Caussin de Perceval, Vol. I., p. 353; J. M. Arnold, p. 230; Palmer's *Quran*, p. 47, etc. Granted that Mohammed was unable to read or write, it is still plain from a thoughtful perusal of any biography of the prophet that he had abundant opportunity to learn from Christians by word of mouth first at Mecca and specially afterwards at Medina. We must remember that *all* the Koran teaching on the Trinity occurs in the *later* Surahs.

VII

PREDESTINATION VS. FATALISM

> "'Tis all a chequer-board of nights and days
> Where destiny with men for pieces plays;
> Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,
> And one by one back in the closet lays."
>
> —*Omar Khayyam.*

> "It is this dark fatalism which, whatever the Koran may teach on the subject, is the ruling principle in all Moslem countries. It is this which makes all Mohammedan nations decay."—*Sell's "Faith of Islam."*

THE sixth great point of faith in Islam[1] is Predestination, and it has important bearing on the Moslem idea of God. It expresses God's relation to the creature and to man as a moral agent. Although the terms used in describing predestination by Moslems and Christians (especially Calvinists) have much similarity the result of their reasoning is far apart as the East from the West. It has often been asserted that the Mohammedan belief in God's eternal decrees and foreknowledge of good and evil is a sort of Oriental Calvinism. This, as we hope to

[1]See the analysis of Islam in table, between pages 16 and 17.

show, is not the case. The word used by the Koran and in the *Hadith* for predestination is *kadar;* in theological works by Moslems the more technical word is *takdir.* Both come from the same root, which means "to measure out," "to order beforehand." The Koran passages on this subject are many; the following are representative:

Surah 54:59: "All things have been created after fixed decree."

Surah 3:139: "No one can die except by God's permission according to the book that fixes the term of life."

Surah 8:17: "God slew them, and those shafts were God's, not thine."

Surah 9:51: "By no means can aught befall us save what God has destined for us."

Surah 14:4: "God misleadeth whom He will and whom He will He guideth." This occurs frequently.

Surah 37:94: "When God created you *and what ye make.*"

And finally, the great proof-text, the Gibraltar in many a hot controversy, Surah 76:29, 30: "This truly is a warning; and whoso willeth taketh the way of his Lord; *but will it ye shall not* unless God will it, for God is knowing, wise."

Not to weary the reader with the commentaries, we give the orthodox interpretation of the above text in the words of Al Berkevi: "It is necessary to confess that good and evil take place by the predestina-

tion and predetermination of God; that all that has been and all that will be was decreed in eternity and written on the *preserved tablet;* that the faith of the believer, the piety of the pious and their good actions are foreseen, willed and predestined, decreed by the writing on the preserved tablet produced and approved by God; that the unbelief of the unbeliever, the impiety of the impious, and bad actions come to pass with the foreknowledge, will, predestination and decree of God, but not with His satisfaction or approval. Should any ask why God willeth and produceth evil, we can only reply that He may have wise ends in view which we cannot comprehend." Practically, all Sunnite orthodox Moslems believe this doctrine in such a way that "by the force of God's eternal decree man is constrained to act thus or thus." This view is undoubtedly in accordance with the traditional sayings of Mohammed. Some of these traditions have been given in Chapter V; those that follow are literally translated from the section on *Kadar* in Mishkat-ul-Misabih:

"God created Adam and touched his back with His right hand and brought forth from it a family. And God said to Adam, I have created this family for Paradise and their actions will be like unto those of the people of Paradise. Then God touched the back of Adam and brought forth another family and said, I have created this for hell and their actions will be like unto those of the people of hell. Then

said a man to the prophet, Of what use will deeds of any kind be? He said, When God creates His slave for Paradise his actions will be deserving of it until he die, when he will enter therein; and when God creates one for the fire his actions will be like those of the people of hell till he die, when he will enter therein."

"Adam and Moses were once disputing before their Lord, and Moses said, 'Thou art Adam whom God created with His hand and breathed into thee of His spirit and angels worshipped thee and He made thee dwell in Paradise and then thou didst make men to fall down by thy sin to the earth.' Adam replied, 'Thou art Moses whom God distinguished by sending with thee His message and His book and He gave thee the tables on which all things are recorded. Now tell me how many years before I was created did God write the *Torat* (the Pentateuch)?' Moses replied, 'Forty years.' Said Adam, 'And did you find written there, Adam transgressed against his Lord?' 'Yes,' said Moses. Said Adam, 'Then, why do you blame me for doing something which God decreed before He created me by forty years?'"

Another tradition relates that Mohammed one day took up two handfuls of earth and scattered them. So he said God "empties His hand of His slaves, a portion for Paradise and a portion for the blaze" (Mishkat, p. 21, bottom. Delhi edition). Another

form of the same tradition puts it still more coarsely: "These are for Paradise and I care not; and these for hell-fire and I care not."[1]

It is related that 'Aisha said: "The prophet was invited to the funeral of a little child. And I said, 'O Apostle of God, Blessed be this little bird of the birds of Paradise, it has not yet done evil nor been overtaken by evil.' 'Not so, 'Aisha,' said the apostle, 'verily, God created a people for Paradise and they were still in their father's loins, and a people for the fire and they were yet in their father's loins.' "

According to these traditions, and the interpretation of them for more than ten centuries in the life of Moslems, this kind of predestination should be called fatalism and nothing else. For fatalism is the doctrine of an inevitable necessity and implies an omnipotent and arbitrary sovereign power. It is derived from the Latin *fatum,* what is spoken or decreed, and comes close to the Moslem phrase so often on their lips, *"Allah katib,"* God wrote it. Among the Greeks, as in Homer, Fate had a twofold force; it is sometimes considered as superior and again as inferior in power to Zeus. Nor does the Greek idea of fate exclude guilt on the part of man.[2] In both respects this idea of destiny is less fatalistic in its results than the teaching of Mohammed. "The God

[1] *Kisas-ul-Anbiya,* Persian edition, p. 21.

[2] See article on Homer's Idea of Fate in McClintock and Strong's *Encyclopedia,* Vol. III., p. 494.

of Islam is more terrible even than the Æschylean Zeus, inasmuch as of Him it cannot be asserted that He fears Fate or dreads the coming of one who shall drive Him from power. Nay, further, instead of being subject to Fate or Necessity, Allah's will *is* Fate."[1] With such attributes as Mohammed ascribed to Allah, these ideas of predestination, or, better, fatalism, are in perfect accord. Islam exalts the Divine in its doctrine of the eternal decrees, not to combine it with, but to oppose it to, the human. This not only leads to neglect of the ethical idea in God, but puts fatalism in place of responsibility, makes God the author of evil, and sears the conscience as with a hot iron. God not only decreed the fall of Adam, but created Adam weak and with sensuous appetites so that it was natural he should fall. (Compare the commentaries on the passage, Surah 4:32, "God wants to make it easy for you and man was created weak.") *"Allah katib,"* God decreed it, is the easy covering for many crimes. Moslem criminals often use it before their judge in a trial; and the judge, remembering Surah 4: 32, sometimes gives his verdict on the same basis.

We can see also what Moslems understand by predestination from their use of certain other religious expressions which are so very common in all Moslem communities. *Inshallah,* "if God wills," that daily cloak of comfort to Moslems, from Calcutta to Cairo,

[1]W. St. Clair Tisdall's *The Religion of the Crescent,* p. 65.

is an example.[1] This phrase is equivalent grammatically, not logically, to the Biblical "if God wills." (James 4:15; Acts 18:21.) To the Moslem, God's will is certain, arbitrary, irresistible and inevitable before any event transpires. To the Christian God's will is secret until He reveals it; when He does reveal it we feel the imperative of duty. The Christian prays, "Thy will be done." This prayer is little less than blasphemy to a strict Mohammedan. Allah only reveals His will in accomplishing it; man submits. Therefore, were a Moslem to pray to Allah, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," he would at the least be guilty of folly. An archangel and a murderer, a devil and a gnat equally execute the will and purpose of Allah every moment of their existence. As He wills, and because He wills, they are what they are and continue what they are.

The same difference appears when we study the phrase, *El-Hamdu-lillah,* "the Praise is to God." The Biblical phrase, "Praise ye the Lord," implies personal responsibility, gratitude, activity; the Moslem phrase expresses submission, inevitableness, passivity, fatalism. Therefore, it is so often used in circumstances that to the Christian seem incongruous.[2] The one phrase is the exponent of Islam, sub-

[1]Surah 18 : 23 and Tradition.

[2]It is true that the common people sometimes use the words to express joyful satisfaction and gratitude to the Almighty. But they use them continually in a fatalistic sense.

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mission; the other of Christianity, joy and gratitude. The first never occurs in Scripture; the latter is absent from the Koran.

The Moslem theory of prayer, also, is in accordance with this doctrine of the decrees. Prayer is reduced to a gymnastic exercise and a mechanical act; any one who has lived with Moslems needs no proof for this statement. According to the Koran and Tradition, prayer is always regarded as a *duty* and never as a *privilege*. It is a task imposed on Moslems by Allah. Allah first imposed fifty prayers a day, but Mohammed begged off from this number, on Moses's advice, ten after ten, until he returned triumphant with only five daily prayers on his list.[1] Moslem daily prayer consists in worship rather than in petition; very few Moslems admit that prayer has objective power as well as subjective.

Mohammedan Fatalism is distinguished, still more radically, from even ultra-Calvinistic views of predestination, when we consider in each case the *source* of the decrees and their ultimate *object*. In Islam there is no Fatherhood of God and no purpose of redemption to soften the doctrine of the decrees.

1. The attribute of love is absent from Allah. We have already indicated this in our discussion of the attributes. The Love of God in a Christian sense

[1] *Mishkat-ul-Misabih* and other books of Tradition in the section on prayer give this story in detail.

means either God's love to us or our love to Him. Both ideas are strange to Islam. An inter-communion of such tender regard between God and the creature is seldom or never spoken of in the Koran. In Surah 2:160 we read: "Yet there are some among men who take to themselves idols other than God; they love them *as God's love.*" But orthodox exegesis explains the last words by saying, *i.e.,* "as His greatness and the impulse to obedience which He causes." (Beidhawi, Vol. I., p. 95.) In Surah 5:59 there is another reference to the love of God on the part of men similarly explained. How strong is the contrast between these *two* or three exceptional passages and the abundant and plain teaching of the Old and New Testament regarding the love which God requires of man and which flows out from God to man!

In like manner God's love to man when it is referred to in the Koran is rather a love for his good qualities than for the man himself. Dr. Otto Pautz, who has collected all the passages that in any way bear on this subject, comes to the conclusion that *"in no case is there any reference to an inner personal relation"* when the Koran even hints at this subject of which the Bible is so full.[1] Umbreit says: "The God of Mohammed is in the wind, and in the earthquake, and in the fire, but not in the still small voice of

[1]Otto Pautz's *Muhammed's Lehre von der Offenbarung quellenmassig untersucht,* Leipzig, 1898, pp. 142, 143.

love."[1] The mystic love of the Sufis (*widespread and weighty though it be in its influence*) is not a characteristic of orthodox Islam, but arose in rebellion to it.

The Fatherhood of God and the repeated declarations of Scripture that God loves the world, loves the sinner, loves mankind—that God is love—all this has had its influence on Christian speculation regarding the problem of God's decrees. *In like manner the character of Allah has been the key to the same problem among Moslems.* Islam, as we have seen, reduces God to the category of the will. He is at heart a despot, an Oriental despot. He stands at abysmal heights above humanity. He cares nothing for character, but only for submission. The only affair of men is to obey His decrees.

2. The Moslem doctrine of hell is in accordance with their coarse beliefs regarding Predestination and Mohammed's utter want of conception of the spiritual. According to the Koran and Tradition, Hell *must be filled,* and so God creates infidels.[2] Of all religions in the world, Islam is the most severe in its conception of the capacity and the torments of hell. "On that day We will say to hell, Art thou full? and it will say, Are there any more?" (Surah 50:29.) The conception of hell is brutal, cruel and to the last degree barbarous. The whole picture, as

[1] *Theol. Studien,* 14 Jahrgang, p. 240.

[2] Surahs 32 : 13; 97 : 5; 4 : 11; 9 : 69. Cf. Commentaries.

given in the Koran and commented on by Tradition, is horribly revolting. "Hell shall be a place of snares, the home of transgressors, to abide therein for ages. No coolness shall they taste nor any drink, save boiling water and liquid pus. Meet recompense!" (Surahs 88:1-7; 2:38; 3:197; 14:20; 43:74-78, etc., etc.) The word *Jehannum* occurs thirty times; fire (*nar*) is still more frequently used; there are six other words used for the place of torment. One cannot read the traditions which give what Mohammed said on this subject without feeling how heartless and loveless is the creed of Islam.[1] Yet it is in connection with such ideas of God that the Moslems believe in Predestination.

It is not difficult to surmise whence Mohammed got his ideas of a Predestination after the pattern of fatalism. Like so much of his other teaching, it seems that the doctrine of *kādār* comes from the Talmud. Rabbi Geiger has shown how Mohammed borrowed from Judaism not only words, conceptions, legal rules and stories, but also doctrinal views.[2] The Scribes and Pharisees differed even at the time of Christ in their view of Predestination. The latter more and more followed a fatalistic idea of God's

[1]Read Chapter X. on the Hell of Islam in Stanley Lane-Poole's *Studies in a Mosque*, pp. 311-326.

[2]See *Judaism and Islam*, a Prize Essay by Rabbi Geiger, translated from the German. Madras, 1898. Also the original work. Wiesbaden, 1833.

decrees. Josephus writes as if, according to the Pharisees, the chief part in every good action depended on fate. (Jewish Wars 2:8.) And Edersheim grants that the Pharisees carried their accentuation of the Divine to the verge of fatalism. Their ideas, he shows, were in every respect similar to the present Moslem ideas. "Adam had been shown all the generations that were to spring from him. Every incident in the history of Israel had been foreordained and the actors in it, for good or for evil, were only instruments for carrying out the Divine Will. . . . It was because man was predestined to die that the serpent came to seduce our first parents."[1] The stories told in the Talmud about predestination of a man's bride, and his position and the place and time of his death, find their duplicates almost verbatim in the Moslem traditions.[2] Wheresoever a man was destined to die thither would his feet carry him, says the Talmud. "On one occasion, King Solomon when attended by his two scribes suddenly perceived the Angel of Death. As he looked so sad, Solomon ascertained as its reason that the two scribes had been demanded at his hands. On this Solomon transported them by magic into the land of Luz, where, according to legend, no man ever died. Next morning Solomon again perceived the Angel of Death, but this time laughing, because, as he said,

[1]Edersheim's *Life of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I., p. 317.

[2]See the References in Edersheim to the Talmudic tractates.

Solomon had sent these men to the very place whence he had been ordered to fetch them." (Talmudic Tractate. *Sukkah,* 53 *a.*) This same story is told by Moslems, according to traditions of the Prophet.[1]

There have been heterodox views on the subject of predestination. But no one who has read the history of Moslem sects can doubt that the account given in this chapter is the orthodox side of the question. The three views to which the multitude of sects can be reduced on this knotty problem are: The *Jabariyun,* or extreme fatalists; the *Kadariyun,* who affirm that man has free-agency (Moslem free-thinkers belong to this school); and the *'Asharians,* who are a little more moderate than the first school.[2] "The orthodox or Sunni belief is theoretically *'Asháriαn,* but practically the Sunnis are confirmed *Jabariyun.*" Other doctrines are considered quite heretical.

When we consider the deadening influence of this doctrine of fatalism we must remember that generally speaking there have been two schools of Moslem philosophy—the orthodox and the heretical. It is only the latter school that added to the knowledge of philosophy one iota. The attainments of the Arabs in philosophy have been greatly overrated. They were translators and transmitters of the Greek philosophy, and whatever was added to Plato and Aristotle

[1]See Commentaries on Surah 32 : 11 and margin of *Daka'ik ul-Akhbar* and *Shammoos-ul-Anwar.*

[2]E. Sell's *Faith of Islam,* p. 173.

came not from the side of orthodoxy, but was entirely the work of heretics, such as Averroës, Alfarabi and Avicenna.[1]

The orthodox philosopher of Islam was Al-Ghazzali, and the result of his work was the complete triumph of unphilosophical orthodoxy.[2]

So utterly barren of ideas and opposed to all reason did this orthodoxy become that Sprenger sarcastically remarks concerning it: "The Moslem student marvelled neither at the acuteness nor yet at the audacity of his master; he marvelled rather at the wisdom of God which could draw forth such mysterious interpretations. *Theology, in fact, had now made such happy progress that men looked on common sense as a mere human attribute—the reverse being that which they expected from Deity.*" And this was one of the results of Moslem speculation on the Koran doctrine of predestination.[3]

[1]See Ueberweg's *Hist. of Philosophy* and Renan's *Hist. Lang. Semit.*

[2]Ibid.

[3]A special study on the Moslem Idea of Predestination has just appeared from the press by Rev. A. de Vlieger of the Calioub Mission. It is entitled, *Kitab al Quadr*, Materiaux pour servir à l'étude de la doct. de la predestination dans la theologie musulmane. Leiden, 1902.

VIII

THE COMPLETED IDEA AND ITS INSUFFICIENCY

> "If we regard God merely as the Absolute Being and nothing more, we know Him only as the general irresistible force, or, in other words, as *the Lord*. Now it is true that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but it is likewise true that it is *only* its beginning. In the Mohammedan religion God is conceived only as the Lord. Now although this conception of God is an important and necessary step in the development of religious consciousness, it yet by no means exhausts the depths of the Christian idea of God."—*Hegel's Werke, Vol. VI., p. 226.*

WHAT is the result of our investigation of the Moslem idea of God? Is the statement of the Koran true, "Your God and our God is the same?" In as far as Moslems are monotheists and in as far as Allah has many of the attributes of Jehovah we cannot put Him with the false gods. But neither can there be any doubt that Mohammed's conception of God is inadequate, incomplete, barren and grievously distorted. It is vastly inferior to the

Christian idea of the Godhead and also inferior to the Old Testament idea of God. In the Book of Job alone there are more glorious descriptions of God's personality, unity, power and holiness than in all the chapters of the Koran. Carlyle in his praise of the Hero-prophet acknowledges this and says "he makes but little of Mohammed's praises of Allah, borrowed from the Hebrew and far surpassed there." Even the Fatherhood of God is clearly taught in the Old Testament, but it is wholly absent from the Koran.

In the comparative study of religious ideas there must be a standard of judgment, and a Christian can only judge other religions by the standard of the Gospel. Islam itself, through its prophet (who came, so he says, as the seal of all prophecy), and in its Book challenges comparison by this standard. We are not dealing with the monotheism of Greek philosophy, which arose in the Court of the Gentiles under Plato and Aristotle; but with a monotheism which arose six centuries after Christ and professes to be an improvement or at least a restatement of the Christian idea. (See Surahs 42 : 1; 10 : 37, 93; 5 : 77, etc.) We accept, therefore, Islam's challenge. Jesus Christ proclaimed that no man knows the Father save through the Son. He is the brightness of the Father's glory. The impress of His essence. Whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father. Mohammed by denying Christ's Deity also denied that He came

on a unique and transcendent mission from the court of heaven—*to show us the Father.* Instead of arriving at his theology through the mind of Christ, as revealed in the gospels and developed through the Holy Spirit's teaching in the epistles, Mohammed went back to natural theology. He did not use, or would not use, the channel of knowledge opened by the Incarnation. Instead of learning from Him who *descended* from heaven, Mohammed asserted that he himself *ascended* to heaven and there had intercourse with God. (Surah 17:2 and the Commentaries.) Whether this "night journey" of the prophet be considered a dream, a vision, or, as most Moslems hold, a physical reality, is of minor importance. The Koran and orthodox Tradition leave no doubt that Mohammed gave out this idea himself, and often stated that he had conversation with the angels and the prophets, as well as with God Himself in Paradise.[1]

The account of this "night journey," as given in the Tradition and widely believed, is both puerile and blasphemous. Nor does the story add anything to the sum total of theological ideas as given in the Koran. Mohammed's account of heaven is borrowed from the Talmud. We conclude, therefore, that Mohammedan monotheism, granting all that can be said in its favor, lacks four elements which are present

[1]See Muir's *Mahomet,* Vol. II., p. 221. Sprenger calls the story "an unblushing forgery" on the part of Mohammed.

not only in the Christian idea of the Godhead, but in the Old Testament as well: (1) *There is no Fatherhood of God.* We have seen how their initial conception of theology is a bar to any possible filial relation on man's part toward Deity. The Moslem's fear of God is not the beginning of wisdom. Allah produces on them a servile, not a filial, fear. No one approaches God except as a slave. Hegel's criticism, at the head of this chapter, shows the opinion of a philosopher on the elementary character of such monotheism. Where there is no Fatherhood toward man there can be no Brotherhood of Man. Islam is an exclusive brotherhood of *believers,* not an inclusive brotherhood of humanity. Assuredly, this characteristic of Islam is responsible for much of its fanatic spirit and its gigantic pride. The denial of God's Fatherhood changes Him into a desolate abstraction. Who can *love* Ghazzali's definition of Allah or feel drawn to such a negative conception? The very contemplation of so barren a Deity "pours an ice-floe over the tide of human trusts and causes us to feel that we are orphaned children in a homeless world."

(2) *The Moslem idea of God is conspicuously lacking in the attribute of love.* We have seen this in our study of Allah's names. But in gathering up the few precious fragments of this idea from the Koran another thing is evident. Whatever Mohammed taught concerning God's mercy, loving kindness

or goodness has reference only and wholly to what God is *external* to Himself. In the Bible, love is not a mere attribute of Deity. God *is* love. God's love not only shines forth from Genesis to the Book of the Revelation, but it is often declared to have existed from all eternity. (Jer. 31:3; John 3:16; 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8.) Fairbairn remarks: "The love which the Godhead makes immanent and essential to God gives God an altogether new meaning and actuality for religion; while thought is not forced to conceive monotheism as the apotheosis of an Almighty will or an impersonal idea of the pure reason."

Moslem mysticism was a revolt against the orthodox doctrine of Allah. The human heart craves a God who loves; a personal God who has close relations with humanity; a *living* God who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and who hears and answers prayer. Such a God the Koran does not reveal. A being who is incapable of loving is also incapable of being loved. And the most remarkable testimony to this lack in the orthodox Moslem conception of Deity is the fact that the passionate devotional poetry of the Sufis is put down as rank heresy. Allah is too rich and too proud and too independent to need or desire the tribute of human love. In consequence Islam is a loveless creed. The Bible teaching that "God is love" is to the learned blasphemy and to the ignorant an enigma. Orthodox Islam is

a religion without song. Where are there any psalms of devotion or hymns of spiritual aspiration in the Koran or the volumes of Tradition?

There is no precept nor example in Islam enjoining love to one's enemies. It knows nothing of universal benevolence or of a humane tolerance. (Surah 9:29.) That the element of love is lacking in their idea of God is perhaps the reason also why the Koran, in contrast with the Bible, has so little for and about *children.* Of such is not the kingdom of Mohammed.

(3) *Allah is not absolutely, unchangeably and eternally just.* It is possible, as some allege, that the Western Church may have emphasized the forensic aspect of God's holiness and righteousness unduly and to excess. But the Bible and the human conscience in all ages also emphasize this truth. It is found in the Greek theism. The Bible is not alone in stating that the Judge of all the earth *must* do right. Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne. It is impossible for God to lie. He will in nowise clear the guilty. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The awful spectacle of Calvary can only be explained in the terms of Divine justice and Divine love. It was, in the words of Paul, "to declare His righteousness; that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Now since Islam, as we have seen, denies the doctrine of the atonement and minimizes the heinousness of sin, it is not surprising that the justice of God

is not strongly insisted on and often presented in a weak or distorted way. As Hauri says: "Neither in His holiness nor in His love is Allah righteous. As regards the wicked, His love does not receive its due; he is quick to punish, to lead astray and to harden; His wrath is not free from passion. As regards believers, His holiness comes short of its right. Allah allows His prophets things otherwise forbidden and wrong. Even ordinary believers are allowed to do what is really not right because they are believers. For example, the prophet said: 'It is better not to have slave-concubines, but Allah is merciful and clement.' "[1]

In Islam, God's law is not the expression of His moral nature, but of His arbitrary will. His word can be abrogated. His commandments are subject to change and improvement. A testimony to this on the part of Moslems themselves is found in their eager attempts to prove that all the prophets were *sinless; i.e.,* that *their* transgressions of the moral law as recorded in the Koran were not really sinful, but that they were permitted these slight faults or committed them in forgetfulness. The greatest feats of exegesis in this line are found in Ar-Razi's Commentary on the verses that tell of Adam's sin, David's Adultery and Mohammed's prayers for pardon. (Surahs 7 : 10-17; 38 :20-24 and 47 :20, 21.) All the laws of logic

[1] *Der Islam*, p. 45. The Koran offers other examples of such clemency! Cf. Surahs 2 : 225; 5 : 91, etc.

and etymology are broken to avoid the natural inference that these "prophets" were guilty sinners. Those who desire to know how far even Indian Moslems can go in defence of this untenable position must read the pamphlet of James Munro, Esq., on the recent *Zanb* Controversy in Bengal and the Punjaub.[1] It is evident that this desire to justify "the prophets" is nothing else than a practical lowering of the standard of ethics. What Adam or David or Mohammed did may *appear* to be sinful, but it really was not. God is merciful and clement.

(4) *There is a lack of harmony in Allah's attributes.* Raymund Lull (1315), the first missionary to Moslems, pointed out this weakness in the monotheism of Islam. He puts forward this proposition: "Every wise man must acknowledge *that* to be the true religion which ascribes the greatest perfection to the Supreme Being, and not only conveys the worthiest conception of all His attributes, but demonstrates the harmony and equality existing between them. Now their religion [*i.e.,* Islam] was defective in acknowledging only two active principles in the Deity, His will and His wisdom, while it left His goodness and greatness inoperative, as though they were indolent qualities and not called forth into active exercise. But the Christian religion could not be charged with this defect. In its doctrine of the Trinity, it conveys the highest conception of the

[1] Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta.

Deity as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in one simple essence. In the Incarnation of the Son it evinces the harmony that exists between God's goodness and His greatness; and in the person of Christ displays the true union of the Creator and the creature; while in His Passion it sets forth the divine harmony of infinite goodness and condescension."[1]

These words are as true to-day as they were when addressed to the Moslems of North Africa in the Middle Ages. In Islam's theology, mercy and truth do not meet together; righteousness and peace have never kissed each other. The only way in which Allah pardons a sinner is by abrogating His law or passing over guilt without a penalty. There is no Substitute, no Mediator, no Atonement. And, therefore, the law-of-the-letter, with all its terror, and the physical hell, ever yawning for its victims, subject Moslems to the bondage of fear unless formalism has petrified their consciences.

"The distinguishing characteristic of Christianity," says Schiller, "by which it is differentiated *from all other monotheistic systems,* lies in the fact that it does away with the law—the Kantian imperative—and in place of it gives a free and spontaneous inclination of the heart."[2] The law is not abolished, but fulfilled in Christ. He blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was

[1]Raymund Lull's *Liber Contemplationis in Deo*, liv., 25-28.
[2]Quoted in Shedd's *Hist. of Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 221.

contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." That cross of Christ is the missing link in the Moslem's creed. Without the doctrine of the Cross there is no possible unity in the doctrine of the divine attributes; for the mystery of redemption is the key to all other mysteries of theology.

We must go a step further. Not only is the Moslem idea of God lacking in these four important and essential ideas of Christian theology, but its insufficiency is most of all evident from its results. The influence of such teaching regarding God and His relation to the world is apparent everywhere in Moslem lands, but especially in Arabia. The present intellectual, social and moral condition of Arabia must be due to the power (or the impotence) of Islam, for no other intellectual or religious force has touched the peninsula for centuries. Islam has had undisputed possession of Arabia almost since its birth. Here, too, the reformation of Islam under the Wahabis exercised its full power. In other lands, such as Syria and Egypt, it remained in contact with a corrupt form of Christianity, or, as in India and China, in conflict with cultured paganism; and there is no doubt that in both cases there were (and are today) mutual concessions and influences. But on its native Arabian soil the tree planted by the prophet has grown with wild freedom and brought forth fruit after its kind.

As regards morality, Arabia is on a low plane.

Slavery and concubinage exist everywhere. Polygamy and divorce are common. The conscience is petrified; legality is the highest form of worship; virtue is to be like the prophet. The Arabic language has no every-day word for conscience and the present book-term does not even occur in the Koran. Intellectually, there has been little progress. The Bedouins are nearly all illiterate and book-learning in the towns is compressed into the mould of Koran philosophy. Arabia has no unity except the unity of intolerance and suspicion. Fatalism has paralyzed progress. Injustice is stoically accepted and the bulk of the people are passive. No man bears another man's burden and there is no public spirit. Treachery and murder are the steps to petty thrones in free Arabia, and in the Turkish provinces justice is sold to the highest bidder. Cruelty is common. Lying is a fine art and robbery a science. Islam has made the hospitable Arab hostile to Christians and wary of strangers. If Mohammedan monotheism had in it the elements of salvation and progress for its devotees, surely Arabia would have witnessed the result. For thirteen hundred years the experiment has been tried—and, by the witness of all travellers, it has piteously failed.

A stream can rise no higher than its source. Islam has no lofty conception of ethics and of holiness like that of the Christian religion. Mohammed's life soon became the standard of morality for all Moslems. In

the Koran he is human; in tradition he becomes sinless and almost divine. *To be as good as Mohammed is the ideal of the Moslem.* Christ rises higher: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Paul's command "to be imitators of God as dear children," is to the orthodox Moslem a double blasphemy. Allah can neither be imitated nor have children. He is unique and nothing can be like Him.

Martensen points out the importance which faith in the *Triune* God has for ethics (*Christian Ethics,* Vol. I., pp. 65-75), and concludes: "If, therefore, Christian dogmatics had not asserted and developed the doctrine of the Trinity, ethics must postulate it in its own interests." All church history shows that a genuine and even a scientific knowledge of God has been better maintained with the doctrine of the Trinity than without it. A knowledge of God as full as we need, as full as He Himself intended we should have, is impossible without the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. So-called pure monotheism has always degenerated into some form of pantheism, whether among Jews, Mohammedans or in Christendom.

Finally, it is evident from our study that the Moslem doctrine of God is sterile. It has neither grown nor been fruitful of new ideas in all the history of Islam. The sheikhs of Al Azhar in Cairo, in the twentieth century, are still content with the definition of Al Ghazzali. On the contrary, the Christian

doctrine of the Godhead beginning with the Old Testament revelation of Jehovah, interpreted in the fulness of time by the Incarnation, developed by the Holy Spirit's teaching through the apostles and systematized in the conflict with heresies and philosophies, is even to-day a growing concept and a fruitful idea. "Let any one trace the course of thinking by the theological mind upon the doctrine of the Trinity, and perceive how link follows link by necessary consequence; how the objections of the heretic or the latitudinarian only elicit a more exhaustive, and at the same time more guarded statement, which carries the Church still nearer to the substance of revelation and the heart of the mystery; how, in short, the trinitarian dogma, like the Christian life itself, as described by the apostle, 'being fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase unto the edifying of itself' into a grand architectural structure—let this process from beginning to end pass before a thinking and logical mind, and it will be difficult for it to resist the conviction that here is science, here is self-consistent and absolute truth."[1]

Islam is proud to write on its banner, the Unity of God; but it is, after all, a banner to the Unknown God. Christianity enters every land under the standard of the Holy Trinity—the Godhead of Revelation. These two banners represent two armies.

[1]Shedd's *Hist. of Doctrine,* Vol. I., p. 4.

There is no peace between them. No parliament of religions can reconcile such fundamental and deep-rooted differences. We must conquer or be vanquished. In its origin, history, present attitude and by the very first article of its brief creed, Islam is anti-Christian. But that does not mean that the battle is hopeless. Christian monotheism is as superior to Mohammedan monotheism as Christ is superior to Mohammed. *There is no god but the Godhead.* Islam itself is beginning to realize the strength of the Christian idea of God, and our chief prayer for the Moslem world should be that they may know the Only True God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. When the great Mohammedan world acknowledges the Fatherhood of God they will also understand the brotherhood of men and the mystery of Calvary.

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